

Saturday January 27 1996

Abu Dhabi D 8.50
Albania L 2.20
Andorra FF 10
Australia AS 28
Bahamas BS 2.00
Bangladesh T 5.00
Belgium BF 20
Bolivia B 1.70
Brazilian R 12.50
Canada C 1.00
Czechia CZ 15.00
Croatia HR 12.50
Denmark DK 15
Ecuador E 1.50
Egypt EG 1.50
Finland FM 11
France FF 10
Germany DM 9.50
Greece G 3.50

Hong Kong HK 5.5
Hungary F 200
Iceland IS 185
India IN 3.50
Indonesia ID 1.50
Italy I 3.00
Japan J 100
Korea K 100
Kuwait K 1.00
Latvia LV 1.50
Lithuania LT 1.50
Luxembourg L 2.50
Malaysia M 2.50
Malta M 1.50
Mexico MX 15
Morocco M 15
Netherlands G 3.75
Norway NK 15
Oman OR 1.00

Pakistan R 70
Poland P 2.70
Portugal P 200
Qatar Q 8.50
Romania R 2.00
Saudi Arabia S 1.50
Slovakia SK 25
Slovenia S 1.50
Spain P 200
Sweden SK 10
Switzerland SF 3
Thailand T 8.50
Turkey TL 150.000
Ukraine U 1.50
USA US 2.75

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
46,460

Outlook: Kate Atkinson interviewed

The woman who won the Whitbread



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Other Lives

Americans go fat-free

Outlook page 15

Sport: the Frank Keating interview

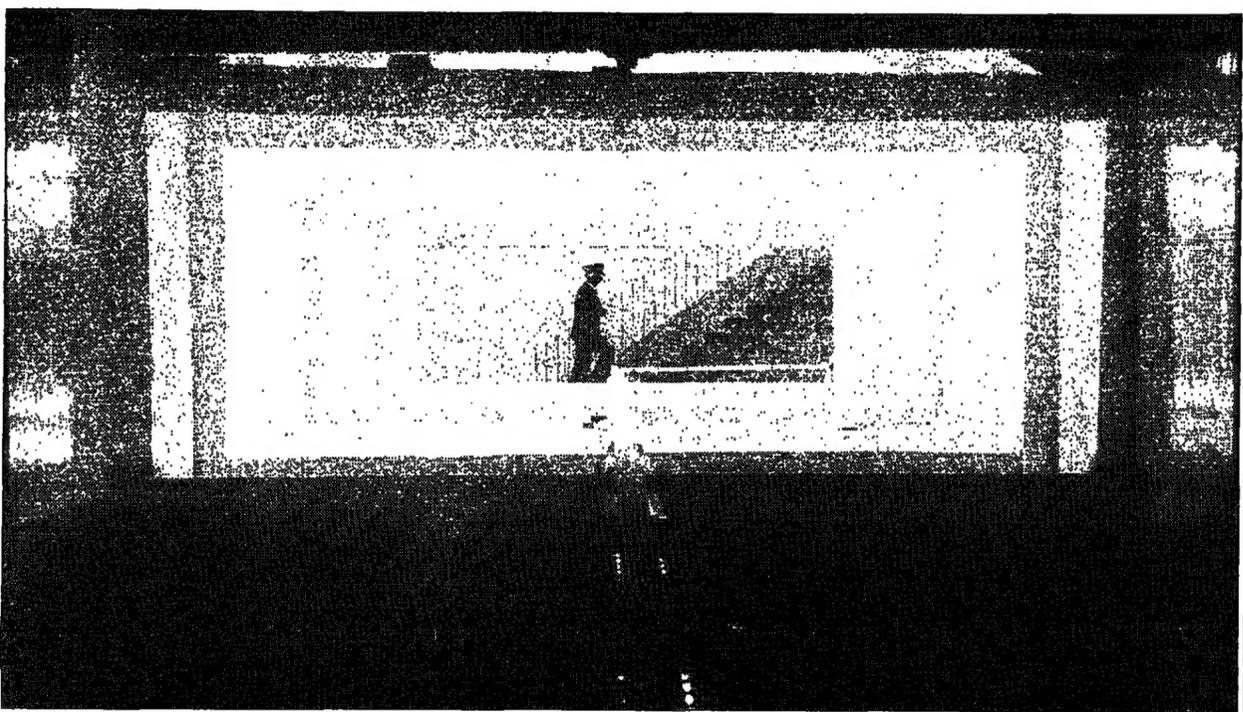
Henry Cooper: why I'm through with boxing



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Parkhurst therapist condemns regime that 'grinds endeavours to a sickening halt'

Jail shock for Howard



Parkhurst, from where Britain's most violent inmates have been removed from therapy and on to a schedule of repeated moves in solitary confinement. PHOTOGRAPH MICHAEL ABRAHAM

Psychiatrist quits over 'harsh' policy

Alan Travis Home Affairs Editor

A SENIOR prison psychiatrist who has spent five years working with the most dangerous inmates in Britain yesterday quit the prison service in protest at Michael Howard's austere penal policy.

In a passionate open letter of resignation, Bob Johnson tells the Home Secretary that the "harshness of your current prison policy has finally ground my therapeutic endeavours at Parkhurst to a sickening halt - I must now resign on principle".

His resignation strikes at the heart of the Home Secretary's policy. Mr Howard has announced that almost 3,000 prison jobs because of reductions in jail budgets will not undercut

regimes designed to confront the offending behaviour of prisoners.

The special unit at Parkhurst has held the most dangerous prisoners in Britain who are not only violent and disruptive but also have psychiatric problems. They are the inmates that Broadmoor special hospital and the Grendon therapeutic prison will not accept.

The specialist team of prison officers working on the unit in Parkhurst's C wing says it has reduced violent incidents by 90 per cent in the past five years and reduced medication used from 3.5 kilograms to only 160 grams a year.

Dr Johnson said yesterday: "They have demolished my unit. It is clear to me that C wing provided a unique service." He notes in his letter that his work put "Dr Bob" on first name terms with six



The following is an extract from the open letter to the Home Secretary from Dr Bob Johnson.

The harshness of your current prison policy has finally ground my therapeutic endeavours at Parkhurst to a sickening halt - I must now resign on principle. Against overwhelming expert evidence you maintain a bizarre attachment to "austerity", which bears especially hard on mentally ill offenders, who include

the most unpredictable and dangerous of all.

Those too violent and dangerous for Broadmoor had been successfully accommodated in Parkhurst's C wing Special Unit until you decimated it two weeks ago by expelling all category A prisoners.

Now they have nowhere to go, and must face a degrading move every three months from prison to prison in solitary confinement for decades - I can no longer support such an inhumane, dangerous and expensive prison policy.

As a doctor, my five years' work on C wing has been exhilarating. We reduced the rate of violent assaults by 90 per cent and heavy medication by 94 per cent.

This open letter is unlikely to deflect you and your ministerial team from your current folly. Nevertheless, as I leave the Prison Service under protest, I hope others will take encouragement from the fact that treating human beings with humanity rather than brutality makes them, and us, safer, more secure and above all more civilised.

Ulster scramble moves to US

Martin Walker in Washington, Michael White and Owen Bowcott

JOHNSON Major's foreign policy advisers descended on the White House yesterday in a scramble to prevent Washington and Dublin uniting in opposition to the Government's demand for elections to a Northern Ireland assembly.

As congressmen and senators reinforced nationalist protests and denounced Mr Major's "ploy to delay and divide the peace process", the Ulster crisis began to accumulate once again on President Clinton's doorstep.

In Belfast, Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein's president, underlined his party's outright rejection of the Government's proposals.

By opting for a Unionist-in-

spired agenda of assembly elections, Mr Major had "binned" the Mitchell report on arms decommissioning and replaced it with yet another precondition before all-party talks, he said.

In Dublin, where the word in political circles was that the prime minister, John Bruton, had been the victim of a "political mugging", Mr Bruton insisted he had not received sufficient advance notice of Mr Major's statements about elections.

He indicated he would hold to the original timetable of launching all-party talks before the end of February.

In London, two senior Tory backbenchers, ex-minister Michael Mates, and pro-Unionist Andrew Hunter, appeared to hint that Sinn Fein's acceptance of the six Mitchell principles would move the process into "a new situation." It was not clear whether acceptance of the six principles would prove sufficient to trigger the elusive talks. The Northern Ireland Minister, Michael Ancrem, had earlier seemed to suggest it would merely help.

The focus of attention in the coming days will be on the other side of the Atlantic.

The British got in first, with White House meetings yesterday to explain that Mr Major's call for early elections before all-party talks did not amount to a rejection of the Mitchell report.

But as Senator Edward Kennedy said bluntly, "It is time for the all-party talks to begin," his nephew, Congressman Joe Kennedy, accused Britain of "grasping at straws to justify its intransigent position."

The Congressional group on Ireland also claimed that

'Extra fun' claim arouses ribbed condom user's displeasure

Lawrence Donagan

ANATION of insecure males breathed a sigh of relief last night when Durex admitted it had overstated the sexual powers of the country's biggest-selling ribbed condom.

In a development which will allow thousands of men to say "I told you it wasn't my fault", the company admitted its Arouser condom may not, after all, "heighten" a woman's sexual pleasure, as promised on the packet.

The London Rubber Company, which owns Durex, said such claims were not "properly substantiated."

"Arouser is a ribbed condom devised to introduce fun into lovemaking. It is... subject to ongoing market research," a spokesman said.

The offending words - which include "designed for pure pleasure" - will not appear again until the claims have been substantiated.

Durex had been forced to change the wording on the Arouser packet after Roy Clarke, a 42-year-old law student at the University of Central England, complained to Birmingham council's trading standards authority after he and his wife decided to road test the condom.

"I didn't believe what they were saying so I decided to try it out. I was right because I found the condom really didn't make any difference at all to us and I felt they should not be able to make these sort of claims," he said.

Staff at Boots's in Piccadilly Circus said last night they expected the Arouser to remain among its biggest sellers.

"I've never tried it myself but it's one of people's favourites," one said.

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£9,000	12.25	127.11	144.36	198.44
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2 CHRONICLE/NEWS

Germany brushes aside Euro fears

Jan Traynor in Bonn

GERMANY has re-examined its strong commitment to launching the single European currency on schedule in three years' time, brushing aside a growing conviction that the timetable and even the entire project were doomed.

A key cabinet policy document, obtained by the Guardian, showed that Germany will not agree to water down the strict terms for entry even if that means only a hard core of EU members join initially.

"The government will emphatically insist that only those countries who clearly meet the criteria laid down in the Maastricht Treaty may take part in Economic and Monetary Union," says the government's draft annual economic report for 1996.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's cabinet discussed the 110-page document yesterday and is due to endorse it early next week. But the government's determination may be undermined by the rapid decline of the German economy.

Official forecasts in the report predicted a government deficit this year at 8.5 per cent - well above the 3 per cent target fixed by the Maastricht treaty for monetary union for a second successive year.

"The chances are increasing that the single currency plan will unravel," said Steve Major, head of bond research at Credit Lyonnais in Paris.

"Despite official attempts to paper over the cracks, more cracks are appearing every day."

Bonn, however, shows no signs of relaxing its campaign to see the single currency introduced on the strictest of

terms and on schedule, despite growing speculation across Europe and barely concealed glee in London that the economic decline across Western Europe means that EMU will have to be delayed or the economic terms slackened.

"The credibility and acceptance of the future European currency require the European Council (of heads of state or government), in deciding on EMU participants, to interpret the convergence criteria strictly," the draft says.

"The EMU project has triggered public concern. The

'Many of the public's fears and anxieties towards EMU are based on misunderstandings and mistaken views'

government will do its utmost to guarantee the Euro's stability, particularly by insisting on strict adherence to the convergence criteria. Many of the public's fears and anxieties towards EMU are based on misunderstandings and mistaken views."

The report goes on: "The government is emphatically against any delay in the launch date. This would not take the substantial risk that efforts to consolidate public finances in many member states are relaxed. There would be no greater likelihood that the convergence criteria are met at a later date."

Leader comment, Outlook page 4; Cosmetic job for Euro, page 24

The Kohl government policy draft makes clear that Bonn wants to push ahead on the single currency even if only a small number of EU states make the grade by the beginning of 1999.

It notes that the government's council of economic experts recently concluded that only a small number of EU members would be ready for the Euro by 1999, but criticises the council's "one-sided" stress on the disadvantages of this while paying insufficient attention to "the risks" in a launch delay.

Deutsche Bank Research, the analysis arm of Germany's biggest commercial bank, projected last week that only Germany, France, Britain and Luxembourg would meet the terms on public debt, budget deficits and inflation rates by the end of next year, the deadline for qualification for the 1999 launch.

Germany scrapes under the public debt ceiling of 60 per cent of gross domestic product at 59.9 per cent, according to the Kohl government's forecast.

The government draft makes it clear that Bonn would rather push ahead earlier with fewer in the EMU club than wait for others to get the best.

But the opposition Social Democrats and senior elements of Mr Kohl's rightwing coalition ally, the Bavarian CSU, are worried that a hard core EMU will split rather than integrate Europe.

The draft has no truck with such arguments. "Successful EMU is also the engine of Europe's further political unification."

The Chief Rabbi is publicly urged to resign

THE Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, suffered the worst setback of his career yesterday when he was publicly urged to resign by an influential group of Jewish community leaders.

The millionaire founder of the Dixons chain, Sir Stanley Kalms, told the Chief Rabbi that he was more suited to academic life and warned that under his leadership, Anglo-Jewry was fast becoming an irrelevance under the "dead hand of reactionary attitudes".

The unprecedented public humiliation of the leader of Britain's 200,000 Orthodox Jews in the Jewish Chronicle, brings into the open the increasing exasperation in the community with the Chief Rabbi's leadership at a time when Orthodox membership is declining significantly.

Sir Stanley said: "Rabbi Sacks has great oratorical skills, but inhibited in his outpourings, the words hardly fill the appetites of Anglo-Jewry. We are in a time-war. We are in a time-war. We are in a time-war."

The Chief Rabbi should consider retiring from office. He is an academic by nature and his talents could be immeasurably better used."

A spokesman for the Chief Rabbi's office said: "Dr Sacks is dedicated to peace and reconciliation so this letter brings him no joy but he will not retire because he has a long-term strategy and it is paying off."

Prominent members of the Jewish community, businessmen Michael Levy and Michael Sinclair, both heads of Jewish charities - gave the Chief Rabbi their support, describing him as a man of great "intellectual stature" who has enormous support. Their comments were echoed by Elfred Ta-

bachnik, the President of the Board of Deputies. But Sir Stanley articulates widespread criticism of the Chief Rabbi in the Jewish community, stinging out three times on which he accuses him of having ranged on electoral pledges, greater tolerance of different interpretations of Judaism, equality for women and peace in the Middle East.

Sir Stanley said the Chief Rabbi's much heralded agency for communal renewal and harmony, Jewish Continuity, is "isolated within a fractious ideology... and seems to accentuate the negative side of communal Jewry".

Rosalind Preston, one of the most prominent Orthodox women in the community, said: "I can understand Kalms' frustration and I would agree that we need a major improvement in talking to Jews of other persuasions." She added that she supported the Chief Rabbi.

Tony Bayfield, director of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain, said: "Communal Jewry is the life of my life, we waste so much time and we appear to be tripping in the 18th century. We're a small and declining community and we need to share resources rather than quarrel endlessly over increasingly trivial matters."

Communal Jewry is cited by young Jews in opinion polls as a major factor deterring them from active involvement: a key concern to the long term demographic survival of Orthodoxy in England and Wales.

The Chief Rabbi has frequently run into controversy over his attitude to different sections of the Jewish community, Reform, Messianic and Liberal Judaism.



Under pressure... Dr Sacks is accused of reneging on electoral promises

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities table with columns for city, today's weather, and tomorrow's weather.

Around the world table with columns for location, temperature, and weather conditions.

European weather outlook: Most regions of Scandinavia will be dry but very cold with a hard frost. The east of dry sunshine likely in the southern and central areas...

Television and radio - Saturday

BBC 1: 8.00 News Summary, 8.01 Weekend, 8.30 Red Dwarf, 8.45 Sports Roundup, 9.00 News Summary, 9.15 Science in Action, 9.20 News Summary, 9.30 The Big Questions, 9.45 First Light, 10.15 See Hear, 10.45 The French Experience, 11.00 The 100 Best, 11.20 Countryfile, 11.30 On the Record, 11.50 EastEnders, 12.30 Australian Open Tennis, 1.00 Match of the Day Live, 1.30 The Road to Wexley, 2.00 News, 2.30 Regional News, 3.00 Sports of the Week, 3.30 The Traditions of the Prophet, 3.50 From Our Own Correspondent, 4.30 White On, 4.50 News, 5.00 The Ed Show, 5.30 News, 6.00 The Ed Show, 6.30 News, 7.00 A World in Your Eye, 7.30 News, 8.00 News, 8.30 News, 9.00 News, 9.30 News, 10.00 News, 10.30 News, 11.00 News, 11.30 News, 12.00 News.

Television and radio - Sunday

BBC 1: 8.00 News Summary, 8.01 Weekend, 8.30 Red Dwarf, 8.45 Sports Roundup, 9.00 News Summary, 9.15 Science in Action, 9.20 News Summary, 9.30 The Big Questions, 9.45 First Light, 10.15 See Hear, 10.45 The French Experience, 11.00 The 100 Best, 11.20 Countryfile, 11.30 On the Record, 11.50 EastEnders, 12.30 Australian Open Tennis, 1.00 Match of the Day Live, 1.30 The Road to Wexley, 2.00 News, 2.30 Regional News, 3.00 Sports of the Week, 3.30 The Traditions of the Prophet, 3.50 From Our Own Correspondent, 4.30 White On, 4.50 News, 5.00 The Ed Show, 5.30 News, 6.00 The Ed Show, 6.30 News, 7.00 A World in Your Eye, 7.30 News, 8.00 News, 8.30 News, 9.00 News, 9.30 News, 10.00 News, 10.30 News, 11.00 News, 11.30 News, 12.00 News.

Arctic spell set to last

Sainsbury

Duchess

More snow on the way as winds pump up the chill factor and roads become impassable

Arctic spell set to last

Sue Quinn

ARCTIC conditions which saw temperatures in parts of Britain plummet to minus 17C yesterday are set to continue over the weekend, causing perilous conditions on the roads.

More snow showers blew in from Belgium last night, with the eastern side of the country worst affected, according to the London Weather Centre.

The eastern area is braced for more heavy snowfalls and freezing temperatures, worsened by a fierce easterly wind.

Wales suffered badly from the freeze yesterday, and hundreds of households last night had their fourth night without electricity.

South Wales Electricity blamed "freak conditions" for the delay in repairs. Some residents also faced water cuts when reservoir pumps failed due to power cuts.

Black ice and drifting snow made many roads around the country impassable. In West Sussex, a 26-year-old woman was killed early yesterday when the car she was travelling in ran out of control on an icy road and smashed into a petrol pump.

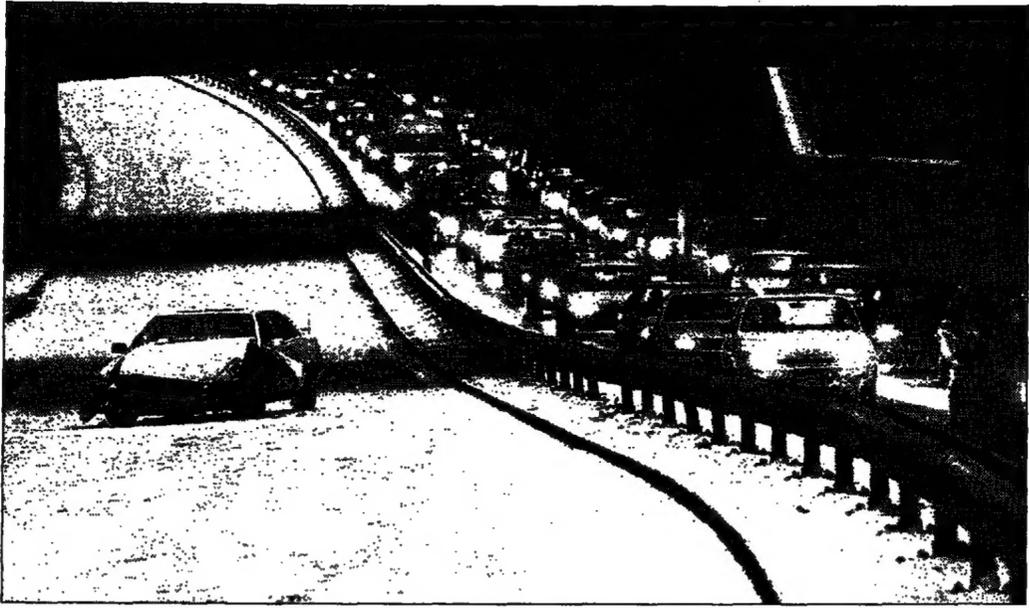
Elsewhere in Sussex emergency services dealt with hundreds of minor road accidents. In Suffolk, Kent and Essex, police reported up to 20 accidents an hour, while snow and ice caused more than 40 smashes in North Yorkshire.

Many office staff in Kent stopped work by 3pm and headed for home as police and weathermen reported "fast deteriorating conditions on the roads, which were covered by three inches of snow."

Thousands of Kent schoolchildren were sent home early amid fears for their safety in the worsening weather conditions.

Last night the AA warned that freezing snow was turning some roads into "sheets of ice" and urged drivers not to travel unless absolutely necessary.

Fears for the elderly prompted charity workers to keep open a national helpline - 0800 285 404 - over the weekend to advise people on managing fuel bills and keeping warm.



Snow-bound traffic in Salford, Greater Manchester yesterday as an accident clears the rush hour in the opposite direction. PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE GRIMES

Twitchers delighted as gales bring rare birds

David Fairhall

BIRD watchers are flocking to the east coast in anticipation of the best weekend of the year for sighting rarities, brought in by the exceptionally cold weather.

A bitterly cold north-easterly gale is perversely welcome, and bird-watchers wander the coastline with telescopes - especially the "twitchers", whose speciality is keeping a tally of rare migrants.

A prolonged spell of arctic blizzards is just the thing to hasten the winter migrants, which fall ashore after an exhausting North Sea crossing from frozen Scandinavia. Mixed with the regular visitors there is always the chance of something unusual - a white-winged gull or Iceland gull among the common varieties - or a rarity like the arctic redpoll that this week descended on Suffolk.

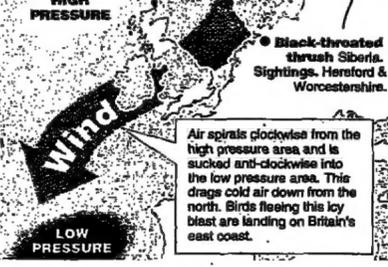
The rarest thing around, according to "Bird Line" (the twitchers' equivalent to the Internet), is a black-throated thrush seen in Redditch, Worcestershire. It ought to be in northern India.

Dedicated twitchers will drive hundreds of miles to add a bird to their lists. Norfolk and Suffolk are among the best places for winter bird watching, often being the first land a gale-driven migrant sees after crossing the North Sea.

An ill wind

Where the more unusual visitors to Britain's east coast are from.

- **Wagtail**: Northern Scandinavia and northwest Russia. Sightings from Newcastle to Essex.
- **Arctic redpoll**, smoky, rough-legged buzzard, and to northwest Scandinavia. Sightings: Arctic Redpoll, Shetlands to Suffolk. Smoky open water in south east England. Rough-legged Buzzard: Suffolk coast near Aldeburgh.
- **Black-throated thrush**: Siberia. Sightings: Hereford & Worcestershire.



present this weekend play a part - freezing temperatures which smother their arctic feeding grounds and strong winds to carry them towards Britain.



A smew duck, one of the rare visitors seen on the east coast

Humiliated Hillary puts on a show

Martin Walker in Washington

HILLARY Rodham Clinton, cheerfully asserting that she was "looking forward to telling everything I know", became the first presidential wife to appear before a federal grand jury yesterday to help with its inquiries into the Whitewater affair.

Called as a witness rather than as "a target", which means no charges are yet envisaged against her, the woman once voted one of America's 100 Most Influential lawyers put a bold face on an extraordinary personal and political humiliation that has made her the most unpopular and least trusted First Lady in history.

Refusing offers of discreet back door entrances, she insisted on the full public spectacle, walking through the main doors of the US District Courthouse and saying a few words for a shrubbery of microphones and cameras, as if to symbolise a clear conscience.

"I'm happy to answer the grand jury's questions and look forward to telling them what I know in the hope that it will help them with their investigation," she said.

With a cool and confident smile, she tossed her hair and swept alone into the courtroom, like an actress making a dramatic entrance. Each step and phrase reeked of rehearsal, and even her costume was deliberately striking. Her black coat billowed behind her, an unusual blaze of white embroidery on its back drawing all eyes.

"It's Ethics, Stupid!" said a large blue and white banner brandished by two young men in jeans and leather jackets, to loom over the heads of small knots of women holding signs that said "We believe in you, Hillary" as her limousine pulled up.

It was a haunting backtrack over the route she and her husband took from their inauguration to the White House three years ago this week.

From the gauntlet of television cameras and reporters, she was led into the windowless, wood-paneled room on the third floor where the 23-member grand jury agreed eight years ago to prosecute Colonel Oliver North and President Reagan's national security advisers.

Along with the 23-member grand jury, the special prosecutor and a stenographer, and with no lawyer allowed to assist her, Mrs Clinton was questioned on oath about her long-lost billing records which mysteriously re-appeared in a room beside her private study. Demanded under subpoena, the White House and Rose law firm had claimed for two years they had been lost without trace.

The records give details of her work for the bankrupt Madison Guaranty, the Arkansas bank owned by the Clinton's partner in the ill-fated Whitewater holiday resort investment, and list her legal work for other actors in the complex saga.

The 116 pages were covered with the scrawled notes of Vince Foster, her former law partner and former deputy White House counsel who committed suicide in July 1993.

Almost all the odds were stacked against her. Grand juries are empowered to ask any question, however irrelevant or in breach of the usual rules of evidence, and the witness is required to answer. They have a written transcript of proceedings, while the witness does not.

The proverb at Yale law school, where the Clintons won their legal degrees, was that "a good prosecutor can get a grand jury to indict a ham sandwich."

In this case, the special prosecutor is Kenneth Starr, solicitor-general in the Bush administration, and leading candidate to become attorney-general in any future Republican administration.

The American public, however, does not trust her. The Gallup poll reported yesterday that for the first time in polling history, 51 per cent disapprove of their First Lady.

Sainsbury warns of profits fall

Roger Cowe

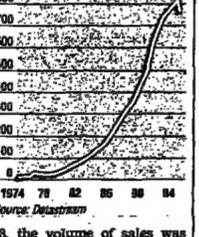
SAINSBURY warned yesterday that its profits for the first time in 20 years, emphasising the extent of its difficulties in stemming the haemorrhage of customers to rival supermarkets Tesco, Sainsbury and Asda.

Its chairman, David Sainsbury, saw his personal fortune fall by £72 million as investors reeled at the scale of the group's problems. Its share price fell by more than 5 per cent, slashing its stock market value by almost £400 million, as analysts calculated that profits this year are likely to be around £785 million, compared with £809 million last year.

Mr Sainsbury claimed that Christmas sales figures showed the trend had turned. In the six weeks to January

Sainsbury's

Pre-tax profits, £m.



18, the volume of sales was similar to the previous year, while in the 10 weeks before this period, sales were at least 1 per cent lower, continuing the trend set earlier in the year. Only higher prices and new stores took takings to a

new record. But City analysts pointed out that sales volumes at Tesco, which last year overtook Sainsbury as Britain's highest supermarket chain, were more than 5 per cent higher this Christmas than last year.

Sainsbury has struggled to match a series of initiatives from its rivals over the past 18 months and several attempts to re-establish its leadership have misfired. It has suffered particularly from Tesco's Clubcard loyalty scheme, but Mr Sainsbury yesterday would not comment on widespread expectations that Sainsbury is about to abandon its Saver Card, which is used in only 40 stores that are vulnerable to new competition, and will introduce a chain-wide loyalty scheme in the spring.

Immediately, Sainsbury is to concentrate on low prices and customer service. Its

profit margins over the next six months will be 0.7 per cent lower than last year as it attempts to entice customers with offers such as the January Savers campaign. It is also to employ an extra 2,500 staff in an effort to improve service.

The group has already acted to improve its marketing and top management. In November, Kevin McCartin was recruited from Procter & Gamble as marketing director. Two weeks ago Mr Sainsbury announced he was relinquishing the chief executive role, which will be filled by Dino Adriano, boss of the group's Homebase subsidiary.

Some observers believe further changes will be needed. "Today's statement is a testament to how deep-rooted the problems are," one analyst said yesterday.

City notebook, page 22

Duchess sued for £95,000 holiday debt

Angella Johnson

THE Duchess of York was yesterday consulting her legal and financial advisers on how to deal with a High Court writ which claims she failed to repay a £100,000 loan.

It is thought to be the first time a member of the royal family has been sued over a debt, and Buckingham Palace moved swiftly to distance itself from the financial embarrassment, insisting it was a matter for the Queen's estranged daughter-in-law.

The duchess, who is reported to be £3 million in the red, is being sued by Lily Rathbone, a London society hostess. The two became friends after meeting at a charity function, but have fallen out over the affair.



Lily Mahtani lent money for holiday in France

cedings. Should the duchess fail to respond, Mrs Mahtani may proceed with the action and judgment may be entered against the duchess without further notice. This could result in bailiffs seizing goods to the value of the debt from Kingsbourne House, the duchess's rented mansion in Wentworth, Surrey.

Mrs Mahtani, aged 38, of Mayfair, claims she gave the money so the duchess could take a six-week holiday in the South of France in 1994. She says the duchess promised to repay the loan after a reasonable period, but when she asked for the money last February she received only £5,000. She has instructed her solicitors to recover the full amount plus interest.

Solicitor Mark Stephens, who has represented James Hewitt and a maid in the Prince's Royal, said the whole thing appeared to have been done to cause maximum embarrassment to the duchess. This is the most ineffectual way of getting money back unless there was some argument over whether or not it was owed. It would appear to be more of a spat than a serious effort to enforce a debt.

Kate Waddington, a spokeswoman for the duchess's office, said the matter was in the hands of solicitor Jonathan Coad, of Schilling and Lom.

Psychiatrist quits in anger at prison cuts

continued from page 1 and held in solitary confinement. Dr Johnson's resignation came as the governor of Dartmoor Prison, John Lawrence, warned that the spending cuts of 13.5 per cent over the three years from April would create stress and unrest among prisoners and staff.

"The cuts will make it impossible to maintain the correct level of humanity, decency and efficiency," Mr Lawrence said. "Already staff morale is very low. Their workload is far too high and the situation will get worse. A return to the repressive regimes of old seems likely."

A West Country Conservative MP, Patrick Nicholls, challenged this view. "It's all very well talking about humanity, but the important point is whether what is being done reduces the security of our prisons," he said.



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

4 BRITAIN

Engineer sees rail signal peril

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

ARAILTRACK design and commissioning engineer has written to the company about what he claims is a dangerous signalling arrangement at Ashford's new international station in Kent.

David Marriott has asked for immediate action at the station, but Railtrack said last night that, while it appreciated his concern, Mr Marriott was "muddled and confused", and that no action was necessary.

In his letter, a copy of which has been obtained by the Guardian, Mr Marriott says: "In all conscience, I cannot remain silent on this issue. I believe the subsidiary routes should be disabled until such time as a more permanent solution can be found."

Signalling at Ashford allows a train to proceed on to a platform behind a stationary train, and is linked up, as is often required at big junctions where train sets are joined into larger units.

Mr Marriott has told his superiors that the signals controlling the entrance to the new international terminal do not comply with existing standards.

His letter says there is a danger that a driver may misread the signalling and an accident could occur.

Two accidents at Newton Abbott and Stafford, where one person was killed and several injured, have already been attributed to systems similar to that at Ashford. New systems have been designed to minimise the risk of collision when more than one train shares a platform.

Railtrack said it had acted

swiftly on Mr Marriott's complaint, which had been taken seriously, but it had been "based on a misapprehension, and that has now been answered".

Within days it carried out two risk tests at Ashford. Kit Holden, deputy chief inspector of railways, also visited the site to examine the details of Mr Marriott's observations. "Mr Holden cleared the signals as safe at the end of December and no further action needs to be taken," a Railtrack spokesman said.

Railtrack maintained that it was "an integral part of our safety case" that drivers operating the route must have a profound knowledge of the line and undergo thorough training. "We could not allow this situation to continue if we thought the signalling at Ashford did not stand up to the highest safety standards," the spokesman said.

Railway sources said last night no action had been taken at Ashford because of the extra cost involved. Any change could have meant the use of emergency manual signalling and delays on the opening of the international station on January 8. Some Eurostar services stop at Ashford to pick up and drop passengers en route to and from Brussels and Paris.

Incidents in which trains arrive on a platform where another is already standing have been reported frequently within the industry. At Paddington last month, where the signalling is the same as at Ashford, an InterCity train arrived on a platform occupied by a train waiting to leave for Oxford. The Oxford driver could not get out of his cab and only quick action by the InterCity driver and dry conditions prevented a serious collision.

Conservationists aim to thwart removal of Pugin window seen as 'great work of art'



Window pain... the disputed Victorian masterpiece at Sherborne Abbey. The window's fate could be decided today.



One of the 27 figures 'resembling a collection of Mr Blobbys'

Abbey continues court fight to oust 'Mr Blobby'

Maev Kennedy
Heritage Correspondent

SHERBORNE Abbey will make a final effort to get rid of a disputed Victorian masterpiece today, at a rare sitting of a Church appeal court.

The Dorset parish has been trying for five years to replace a 60ft high stained glass window, designed in 1851 by Augustus Pugin.

The Vicar of Sherborne, the Rev Eric Woods, describes it as "resembling a collection of Mr Blobbys" and says it has never been liked.

William Filmer-Sankey, director of the Victorian Society, which is opposing the window's replacement, calls it "a great work of art by a genius".

Three judges at the Court of Arches in London this morning, will try to resolve the dispute.

Last year Diocesan Chaplain, Judge John Ellison, ruled in the consistory court that the parish may remove the window.

The decision to dismantle it, and put it into store at the Worshipful Company of Glaziers, was taken by the previous vicar, but Mr Woods entirely supports it.

He told the consistory court last year that the painting on the stained glass has faded so that the faces of the 27 Old Testament prophets and kings were featureless pink blobs. It was a visiting schoolboy who originally compared them to Mr Blobby.

Mr Filmer-Sankey said yesterday that the window was not designed as a breathtaking work of art in isolation, but in harmony with the 15th century building, and theologically in harmony with the other windows.

The society will attempt to persuade the court to admit the evidence of its expert witness, David Lawrence, who has restored a Pugin window in Sussex.

The parish says that the window is seriously damaged by water penetration, and impossibly expensive to restore.

However, Dr Lawrence's report suggests that the window is in sound structural condition, and that repair and replacement of a few key pieces could restore it.

Exercise diet for couch potatoes

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

COUCH potatoes will be exhorted to go dancing, get out the vacuum cleaner or take the dog for a walk in a £9 million government campaign to try to make the nation fitter.

The campaign, to start in March, will shift the emphasis of advice on exercise from urging strenuous activity to recommending anything that leaves you feeling warm or slightly out of breath.

Research carried out by the Health Education Authority has found that many people are being put off exercise by the idea that it necessarily involves working out in a gym and wearing lycra shorts.

As many as one in three of the population fall into the category "completely sedentary". Growing numbers of people have a weight problem. Department of Health figures show that 56 per cent of men are overweight, 13 per cent of them obese, compared with 39 per cent (6 per cent obese) in 1980. Among women, the figures are 46 per cent overweight (16 per cent obese), against 32 per cent (8 per cent obese) in 1980.

A Whitehall working party on obesity has called for

action to improve people's diet and exercise level, including radical measures to cut use of cars and increase cycling and walking.

The campaign, to be led by the HEA, will represent a modest start on this. Television advertisements will tell viewers slumped in front of their sets that they can do something about their fitness simply by doing the housework or walking round the block.

The authority insists it is not dropping its standing advice encouraging vigorous exercise three times a week by those capable of it. It says the campaign will concentrate on urging other people to work towards being "moderately physically active" for a total of 30 minutes at least five days a week — each half-hour target being achievable in 10- or 15-minute bursts.

"The key thing, especially for people who are completely sedentary, is to start slowly and build up," said an HEA spokesman. "The message we want to get across is that it's OK to do things like dancing, digging the garden or whatever."

The campaign will run for three years. A sample of 5,000 people will be monitored regularly through the period to gauge its success.

Avant-garde rave where lunch is only certainty

Manchester prepares to host an anarchic review of the Situation

David Ward

THE Hacienda, the club which created Manchester's dance culture, is the setting this weekend for an avant-garde rave which could prove to be one of the most extraordinary academic conferences staged in Britain.

Rows and denunciations are promised as up to 200 delegates from around the world discuss an anarchic political and artistic movement which paved the way for the howlings of the Sex Pistols and the cow-slicing of Damien Hirst.

The guru was Guy Debord, a defiant French savant, lover of war games and drunk who shot himself in 1994.

which had the "revolutionary potential to disrupt and transform everyday life".

The Situationist International was formed as a force using art to subvert the establishment during a wild week

of booze and free love in the Italian village of Cosa d'Arroscio in 1957. The movement's limited membership — intellectuals, artists and revolutionaries — spent most of the following years sub-



Guru: Guy Debord, a lover of war games and drinking

verting and expelling each other. But their slogans and tactics have been hailed as influences on the films of Jean-Luc Godard, the philosophy of Jean Baudrillard, the activities of the Reder-Meinhard gang and the iconoclasm of K Foundation, the band that burned £1 million and tried to sell the ashes as art.

The events on Paris streets in 1968 are recognised as the ultimate "situation", but the conformism of later years depressed adherents so much the movement fell apart.

But its memory lingers on, not least in the name of the venue, taken from a Situationist text which declares: "The Hacienda must be built." The club's founder, Anthony H. Wilson (known for the strange Situations he finds himself in on a regional TV talk show), will take part in a discussion on Situationist Fallout: Punk Rock, New Wave And The End Of The World.

Disciple: Jean-Luc Godard influenced by Situationists

SI founder member Ralph Rumney will offer some bracing remarks "concerning the Indignance of post-Situationists in their attempts to recuperate the past" and Ben Watson, author of a book on Frank Zappa, will talk on The SI Boot Sale: The Trail Of Letratre Poetics And Proletarian Politics By The Popsicle Academy.

There will also be discussions on psychogeography, which studies the emotional effects of urban space based on the *drift*, a random drift through a city's streets.

"All sorts of people claim to be Situationists so it's good to have an event where they get together and fight over a definition," said Mr Bowd, who expects to be denounced by at least one French delegate.

Mr Bowd says Mr Rumney, the psychogeographer, now lives in a village in Provence. "There is a nightclub there called the Hacienda. It's run by the Mafia."

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25 Jan 1996

The Guardian Saturday January 27 1996

Newbury protesters prepare for end of the high life

Vivek Chaudhary at a treetop standoff

DOZENS of tree top protesters living along the proposed route of the A34 Newbury bypass were preparing last night to be evicted by bailiffs and security guards after a High Court judge granted possession orders against them.

Mr Justice Collins said the Department of Transport had made out its case in law and he had no discretion to refuse or suspend the possession orders they were seeking. Lawyers representing the protesters were refused leave to appeal, but were told they could approach the Court of Appeal directly.

Possession orders were granted against sites near the River Kennet, Elmore Woods, Reddings Copse and The Chase. The department is expected to return to court on Monday to obtain possession orders against two more camps.

As news broke of the decision, protesters in Newbury began taking stocks of food up to the trees in preparation for the arrival of bailiffs. Aerial walkways have also been erected between the trees.

A spokesman for the Highways Agency said it would like to take possession of the four sites immediately. "The timing depends on the bailiffs, but we can serve eviction notices immediately. We are quite satisfied with the progress of the work so far, and the work will continue until it's finished."

During the High Court hearing, David Watkinson, for the protesters, argued that the compulsory purchase orders which the department has issued were invalid because they should have been preceded by an environment impact assessment as required by an EU directive.

Mr Justice Collins said the directive, which came into effect in Britain in July 1988, did not have retrospective impact on projects already in



In the audience... Bob Martin: 'I've been a loner most of my life. Cats has widened my life, given me a new direction'

Cats still drags in audiences after 15 years

BOB MARTIN took the train to London yesterday for a night out at the theatre. Nothing unusual about that, but he is doing the same thing today, and on Monday; and each time it is to see Cats.

By then Mr Martin, aged 65, a retired printroom manager, will have seen the show 485 times, and Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's "pension fund" will have become the longest-running musical both in London and on Broadway.

"Every performance is a little different," said Mr Martin, of Eastleigh, Hampshire, who did not acquire his obsession with Cats until December 1988, seven years after the first night in a West End theatre.

Indeed, the show could have foundered even before Mr Martin became aware of it. Judi Dench broke her Achilles tendon and had to be replaced by Elaine Paige 24 hours before it opened at the New London theatre on May 11, 1981.

At that stage Sir Andrew had raised only half of the £200,000 it took to open the show; other than the disastrous Jeeves, it was his only musical without



On the stage... Steven Wayne, who hasn't missed a performance since opening night

words by Tim Rice; and the lyrics of Cats were by the late T S Eliot, who hardly had his finger on the pulse of popular culture.

"I'd never heard of him until I started going to the show," said Mr Martin. "I've spent about £12,000 on it. Terrible, isn't it? But I'd only have spent it on something else: books on World War II, espionage, books on the brain or records, big bands and ballads from the 40s and 50s."

His seat at the theatre usually costs £30 and the concessionary return rail fare is £12.30. But on Monday, when he will be joining the cast to celebrate breaking the record, he will stay overnight in a hotel.

"I always go up on my own. I've been a loner most of my life. But I've got to know everyone involved in the show; they're a great bunch. I've got this running joke with the front-of-house staff, who pretend

my ticket's stolen or forged, or they say I'm banned from the theatre."

But friends move on with cast changes. "I go to see their new shows to keep them happy. I've seen Crazy for You 19 times. Les Miserables seven times. Me and My Girl nine times. Cats has widened my life, given me a new direction."

Line's Broadway record of 6,137 performances. It has taken more than £85 million in London, where it has been seen by seven million people; £500 invested in 1981 would have brought a return of £26,400 by now, and many stumped up £15,000-£20,000.

The show has made £1 billion worldwide, and there are nine productions - in London, Manchester, New York, Milwaukee, Tokyo, Hamburg, Budapest, Adelaide and Berlin.

Sir Andrew has four musicals in London, with another two revivals on the stocks. The only constant in among the writer of figures is Steven Wayne, a dancer aged 36, who has been with Cats since it opened in London.

"I've been in all the performances except for holidays and a couple of injuries, a hernia and a broken foot. I started as a kitten and now I'm George in the chorus. I suppose I've had about 10 roles in all."

"I came to London and couldn't decide whether to train as a dancer or a physical education teacher. But dancing seemed a lot easier and wouldn't take so long. I didn't know what I was letting myself in for."

Cats facts

- Since Cats opened at the New London Theatre in 1981,
 - the box office has used 5.5 miles of adding machine paper, 780,000 paper cups, 31,875 headache pills and 1,232,737 envelopes;
 - the crew has replaced 6,187 seats, used more than 36,625 posters and 360 gallons of varnish on the floor;
 - the sound department has got through 450 microphones and 39,000 batteries;
 - the stage managers have used 180,000 plastic cups, 38,000 pain-killing pills, 18,720 packets of throat tablets, 5,480 pints of milk and 780 pens for signing autographs;
 - the wardrobe department has replaced 3,900 pairs of shoes and provided 24,400 boxes of tissues;
 - the stage electricians department has changed 23,400 bulbs in the auditorium and used 30,552ft of cabling;
 - there have been more than 100 versions of Memory, the show's big number, which had been played on radio in the US a million times by 1988. In Britain, it has been played 46,876 times on radio and television, and sheet music sales have topped 85,000.

£100m water bill threat for protection of rivers

Geoffrey Gibbs

WATER consumers may have to foot the £100 million cost of building new sewage treatment works on two of Britain's biggest river estuaries.

The High Court ruled yesterday that an attempt by Environment Secretary John Gummer to classify the Humber and Severn estuaries as "coastal waters" was unlawful.

Councillors feared that if the "coastal waters" designations were allowed to stand, substantial amounts of harmful sewage would be discharged into the estuaries, to the detriment of birds, marine life and the environment.

Mr Justice Harrison allowed challenges by Hull city council in respect of the Humber, and Bristol city council and Woodpring district council in respect of the Severn.

The councils complained that the Government was unlawfully allowing UK water authorities to apply a lower standard for sewage treatment than that demanded by a 1991 EU urban waste water directive setting standards

across Europe for discharges into the marine environment. The High Court ruling means that urban waste pumped into the estuaries may have to be given both primary and secondary treatment.

Depending on the outcome of any appeal by Mr Gummer, it could force Wessex Water to upgrade treatment plants at Portishead and Avonmouth, and Yorkshire Water to reconstruct plans for an advanced secondary treatment plant on the Humber - costs that would ultimately be borne by consumers in the two regions.

Bristol city council spokeswoman Jackie Hawken said the High Court ruling was common sense. "We are really pleased. Environmental groups will also be delighted as will the people of Bristol."

Mr Gummer argued the enormous cost to water authorities of installing the stringent secondary treatment works required to treat sewage before it was discharged into an estuary would be a waste of public money, because no additional environmental benefit would result above that achieved by

primary treatment, which was all that was required for coastal waters.

But in his ruling the judge said that, if cost considerations were allowed to permit the re-drawing of boundaries, "the result would be the establishment of estuaries which were not really estuaries at all but areas of water defined in such a way as to avoid the obligations imposed by the directive."

If Mr Gummer decides to fight the judge's ruling, he will have to get leave to appeal from the Court of Appeal.

An Environment Department spokeswoman insisted last night that the government was "firmly committed" to the proper implementation of the waste water directive.

"The court has decided that the secretary of state's interpretation of a detailed part of the directive was incorrect. We intend to study the terms of the judgment in detail before deciding whether to lodge an appeal or what further action to take."

Wessex Water said it would do whatever was necessary to meet the requirements of the waste water directive "once we are in a position to do so".

Greenpeace dumps two more of its warriors

James Meikle

TWO more leaders of Greenpeace International's campaign against nuclear testing in the Pacific have lost their jobs.

One said they had been blamed for the "hisco" when two of the organisation's ships were seized by French commandos near Mururoa last year.

Thomas Shultz, who co-ordinated the anti-nuclear operation, left by mutual agreement last night, while Paul McGee, the London-based co-ordinator of international action, left under organisational changes which took effect on December 31. Their boss, Ulrich Jurgens, the overall campaigns director, resigned four months ago.

Greenpeace denied the latest departures were connected with the Mururoa campaign.

Mr McGee suggested the organisation was trying to combine publicity "hits" and more talks with big business and spend less time on long-term direct action.

Mr Jurgens appears to have been forced to resign because he discussed the internal wrangles with journalists.

Some who allegedly broke orders have fared better. Stephanie Mills, campaigner upon the Rainbow Warrior, one of the vessels seized, is back as campaigns director for Greenpeace New Zealand, and Xavier Pastor, campaigner on MV Greenpeace, has returned to Greenpeace Spain.

Mr Shultz was last night unavailable for comment. A Greenpeace spokesman confirmed differences with Thilo Bode, the executive director, but denied Mururoa was a factor.

Mr McGee's job had merged with that of marine services co-ordinator, as part of a restructuring that made several of the organisation's 63 campaigners redundant.

The idea Mr Bode wanted to give up action in favour of talking was false. "You may wear a suit, instead of a life-jacket, but it is still confrontational."

The two ships and other equipment worth £10 million are still held by the French.

Russian Waterways of the Golden Ring



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The opening of the waterways between St Petersburg and Moscow allows us to link up to two great cities with a relaxing cruise that travels the New River, Lake Ladoga, the Svir River, Lake Onega, the Baltic Canal, White Lake, the Volga River and finally the Moscow and Volga Canal. This intricate system of waterways has a beauty that is hard to describe. Severe, peaceful and majestic with silver birch and pine forests, sandy shores, calm flowing water and spectacular late sunsets, in these realms of the 'White Nights', calls will be at such historic towns as Uglich, where the blue cupolas decorated with the golden stars of the riverside churches make a stunning landmark.

For many the visit to Kizhi Island in Lake Onega will be the highlight of the waterway journey. Here the magnificent Church of the Transfiguration with its 22 shimmering gilded domes in three tiers more than matches for the fifty splendours of Moscow's St Basil's. From here we cruise through the fascinating waterway system through Gorky to the cities of the Golden Ring stopping at Yaroslavl and Uglich on the mighty Volga. These magical cities of Holy Russia still preserve their medieval traditions, fortified monasteries and churches, in surroundings remote from the modern world.

For this journey we have selected the MS Karamzin which, although not as high a standard as our other vessel the MV Kirov, offers very good facilities considering the competitive tariff. This is especially relevant in view of the high hotel prices now applied in Russia due to the restriction of the hotels. This tour will therefore appeal to those wishing to see unspoilt parts of Russia from an economical and comfortable base.

The MS Karamzin This comfortable, well-maintained ship was built in Germany and is partially renovated this year. All cabins are outside with large picture windows (except those on the Lower Deck that have two porches), private shower, toilet and individual temperature control; the ship is fully air-conditioned. The bright, pleasant restaurant has windows on three sides offering views as you dine. Cuisine (Russian and Continental) is adjusted to western taste. There is a main lounge/bar with live music, several more lounges, a sunbather's shop, beauty shop and ample deckspace. Laundry service is available and a medical doctor is on board. As the ship is now under Western management, you can expect many upgraded amenities (including quality towels, soap, toilet paper, coffee) and better food service, cruise director and staff.

Day 7 Yaroslavl - a city sightseeing tour will include the churches of the Korovniki overlooking the Volga and fine examples of the town's 16th-century architecture.

Day 8 Cruise along the Volga to Uglich. Founded in the 12th century, it was here that Ivan the Terrible's youngest son, Dmitri, was murdered. Visit the Church of St Demetrius, built on the spot where his body was found. On our walking tour we will also see the medieval Kremlin. Sail in the evening towards Moscow.

Day 9 Sail along the River Moskva reaching Moscow itself in the late morning. A city tour is arranged for the afternoon.

Day 10 Morning city tour of Moscow to include the major sights such as Red Square, St Basil's Cathedral and the Kremlin.

Day 11 Transfer to the airport for the flight to Gatwick.

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Andrew Higgins on new light being shed on China's thinking behind the bizarre 1958 Taiwan crisis

How Mao tried US steel and lost

ON AUGUST 1958, as China and the United States teetered on the brink of war over Taiwan, Mao Zedong took a swim in the Yellow Sea and summoned the politburo to the beach.

The People's Liberation Army was bludgeoning the Taiwanese-held island of Quemoy with up to 40,000 shells a day. Washington was in uproar; Moscow was on edge. On holiday in the summer resort of Beidaihe with Deng Xiaoping and other leaders, Mao chaired a crisis conclave in his bathrobe.

At a time when China's intentions towards Taiwan are again arousing international concern, previously unpublished speeches and other accounts of Mao's behaviour at the height of the cold war shed light on Chinese military decision-making.

Mao lurched between blood-curdling rhetoric about nuclear war and sober calculations of the balance of power. In remarks on the beach two days after the shelling of Quemoy (also known as Jimmen) began, he spoke obsessively of the United States and the need to test how far Washington would go to defend Chiang Kai-shek's concerns that still dominate China's policy towards Taiwan. As soon as Washington ordered in the Seventh Fleet, Mao backed off.

Roderick MacFarquhar, a leading scholar of modern China at Harvard University, says China's current leadership is again working America's commitment to Taiwan but lacks the confidence that allowed Mao to step back from brinkmanship once the 1958 crisis became too dangerous.

"Mao could back-pedal and not worry. [President] Jiang Zemin is so busy looking over his shoulder and glancing sideways he can't afford to back off," he said. "In that sense the situation is more dangerous."

A recent conference on the cold war in Asia sponsored by Hong Kong University and the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars highlighted the importance of Taiwan in shaping China's volatile relations with both the Soviet Union and the US: what was supposed to be an "internal affair" has always been at the centre of Beijing's most important international relationships.

According to transcripts from Russian archives of

Mao's first summit in Moscow in December 1949, the Chinese leader asked Stalin "to send volunteer pilots or secret military detachments to speed up the conquest of Formosa" — the island now called Taiwan and to which the defeated Nationalists had fled earlier that year.

Stalin declined, suggesting instead that Mao should organise an uprising on the island. The Soviet refusal to help "liberate" Taiwan rankled and was bitterly remembered years later when Moscow and Beijing split.

Moscow was horrified when Mao later ordered the PLA to bombard Quemoy. The bombardment began on August 23 1958, and triggered one of the most explosive and bizarre cold war episodes. It outraged Washington, appalled the Kremlin and rattled Chinese leaders.

It now emerges that Mao himself barely slept throughout the crisis and fretted constantly about killing US troops helping the Nationalists. "Look before you leap. You cannot be too careful," he told the politburo.

"The thousands of shells fired at Jimmen are only a reconnaissance to observe the enemy's reaction. It is not reconnaissance to determine the strength of Chiang Kai-shek's defence but reconnaissance to determine American determination."

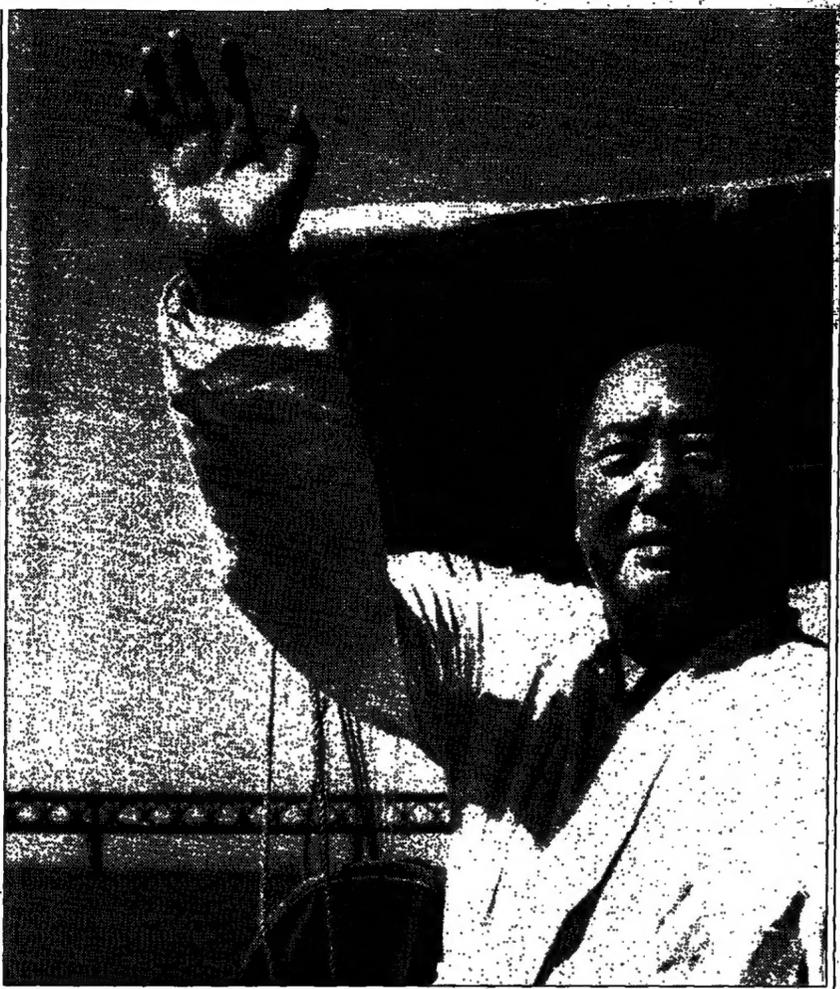
The US reply was swift. Within days of the first shells, more than 30 American ships, including six aircraft carriers with more than 500 aircraft, were in or heading towards the narrow silver of sea between Taiwan and China.

The speed and scale of America's response left Mao badly shaken.

"I look, we have fired a few shells on Jimmen and Matsu," he said. "I did not expect the entire world to be so deeply shocked, nor the smoke and mist now shading the sky. This is because people are afraid of war. They are afraid the Americans will make trouble everywhere in the world."

Keen to avoid all-out conflict, despite his bellicose anti-American rhetoric, Mao told the PLA to scale back operations and fire shells on odd-numbered days only. The crisis was over.

Washington tore up its defence treaty with Taiwan in 1979 but still hints, as part of a Pentagon policy known as "strategic ambiguity", that it



Bathrobe warrior... The great helmsman went swimming in the Yellow Sea as cold war fires burned

could intervene to help Taipei in an attack.

According to Russian documents, fear of conflict with the US also made Mao pause before entering the Korean War in 1950. Stalin had urged Mao to send five or six divisions to help the crumbling regime of Kim Il-sung, even if this meant starting a third world war. "If war is inevitable, let it be waged now," Official Chinese histories present Mao as a gung-ho ally of North Korea, unhesitating in his offer of troops. In reality he seems to have been far more prudent, telling Stalin that he feared "an open conflict between China and the US" that could ignite "a war that would be extremely large".

It took another week for Mao to change his mind and agree to send "volunteers" to fight in Korea.

Japan's women atone for their 'silent crime'

Sheryl Wodman in Kamakura, Japan

WINDING her way among thousands of tiny statues in an ancient hillside temple, Yuka Sugimoto finds the one she seeks and lingers in contemplation of the secret act that brought her here.

Many Buddhists come to temples to pray for good health, a husband or money, but not Ms Sugimoto. Every month she comes to this temple in the ancient Japanese capital of Kamakura to make amends for the abortion she had nearly two years ago as an unmarried student.

To her, it was a necessary evil at the time. But, like tens of thousands of women in Japan, Ms Sugimoto regularly visits a Buddhist temple to console a tiny statuette. Known as a *mizuko jizo*, which she believes personifies her lost baby.

"I think I've done something bad enough to be cursed," said Ms Sugimoto, who travelled here from Tokyo. "I'll be scared when I have my next baby."

Japan is not divided by the abortion debates common in the West. Abortion is legal in the first five months of pregnancy, and it hardly raises a public murmur. There are no protests at abortion clinics, and no politicians campaigning on the issue.

The Japanese do not share the religious belief that a foetus is a human being. Yet while abortion is widely seen as a woman's choice, many women are uneasy afterwards.

The tens of thousands of *mizuko jizo* — guardians of aborted and miscarried fetuses, stillborn babies and dead infants — testify to a pervasive but silent mourning. In temples throughout the country, women and sometimes men stand before these monuments to express their grief, fears, confusions and hopes of forgiveness.

Often intimidation, or superstitious fear, send young women into temples after an abortion. But there may be deeper sentiments.

"The fact that you have murdered someone will be with you all your life — it will not disappear," said a 27-year-old saleswoman whose words prompted a swell of tears from his girlfriend.

Temple worshippers pay a fee to adopt a *mizuko* and inscribe their names on it. They dress up the figurines like little newborns, wrapping them in bibs, hand-knitted sweaters and booties.

A middle-aged woman who had been comforting her *mizuko* for the past 10 years said: "I pray for its spirit to safely enter the other world, which it can do easily because it died from my own negligence, from my mistakes." — New York Times

China and Philippines trade gunfire in battle at sea

Mick Curran-Bruce in Manila

PHILIPPINE navy patrol boat exchanged gunfire with a Chinese ship in the most serious South China Sea incident since a tense confrontation in the contested Spratly islands eight months ago.

The gunboat fired a warning shot after two ships identified as Chinese were spotted early on Monday, about 70 miles west of Manila, near the former American naval base of Subic Bay.

As one Chinese ship sped off, the other fired back and a 90-minute battle ensued, the Philippine military reported.

The gunboat fired at the Chinese ship, inflicting heavy casualties, after it tried to ram the navy vessel, the military said. The gunboat pursued the two ships as they fled, but broke off the chase when it ran out of fuel.

Both governments played down the incident yesterday, in an attempt to uphold their commitment to exercise restraint in the area, reached last year amid rising tension over the Chinese occupation of Mischief Reef, part of the Spratly islands.

China said it had nothing to do with the incident. The Philippines defence secretary, Ramon de Villa, referred to a "kind of a piracy incident". The foreign ministry said the incident had no "political significance".

A Philippine military report said one of the ships was "identified as a Chinese vessel... with a red star flying on her mast" but a spokesman said the navy was checking information which had not been verified.

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SOCCER: FA CUP FOURTH ROUND

David Lacey examines the weekend's matches and tries to untangle some twists of fate on the road to Wembley

Spurs regain a goal and a goalkeeper

ONE-CUP WONDERS WITH THE CHANCE TO TRIUMPH A SECOND TIME



Singular success... for Charlton Athletic, greatly assisted by this save from Sam Bartram, top, in their only FA Cup success, the triumph over Burnley in 1947; for Southampton, whose team, right, enjoy their supporters' acclaim on the traditional open-top bus tour of the city to show off the trophy after the 1976 win against Manchester United through Bobby Stokes' goal; and for Ipswich, whose captain Mick Mills and scores Roger Osborne hold the trophy, left, after the 1976 success against Arsenal.



IT WOULD be stretching a point to say that yesterday's decision by Uefa to lift the European suspensions on Tottenham Hotspur and Wimbledon fielding weakened teams in the Inter-Cup was a victory for common sense. If common sense had really prevailed this hasty decision would never have been promoted from its 30-odd years of obscurity in the first place. At least Spurs are back on familiar ground. That is to say they can now address themselves to the task of making progress in the FA Cup having appealed successfully against yet another ban, this time with the Football Association on their side instead of glowering in the opposite corner. European football next season was never Wimbledon's priority, given their quest for Premiership survival, but since England has been docked a place in the Uefa Cup the value of a spot in the Cup Winners' Cup was enhanced. In fact Wimbledon's chances of reaching the last 16 in the FA Cup have been enhanced by the knee injury that threatens to keep Turnbull out of Middlebrough's attack this afternoon. Tottenham will decide on the fitness of their defenders Wilson and Mahbutt before their fourth-round tie at home to Wolverhampton Wanderers today but at least Walker has recovered from his stomach bug and retains his place in goal. The attacking presence of Sheringham and Armstrong should be enough to see off Wolves. A win for Tottenham this afternoon, followed by a favourable draw, would considerably reduce their Cup odds. So would a further culling of some of the other strong bets. The early departures of Newcastle United, Arsenal, Blackburn and Sheffield Wednesday have already left more room for Spurs, Liverpool, Manchester United, Chelsea, Aston Villa, Leeds, Nottingham Forest and Everton, the holders, to bustle in. Should one or more of these teams go out over the next 72 hours the field will begin to look wide open. Yesterday three fields

Shrewsbury fear red army extras

SHREWSBURY TOWN expect the fourth round's smallest crowd and biggest safety concerns. For the game against Liverpool at the Gay Meadow today, West Mercia police have prepared for the possibility of an influx of supporters without tickets or with forged ones. "I am very concerned about playing the match here," said the Shrewsbury chairman Ray Bailey. The police, in conjunction with the Football Licensing Authority, have set a crowd limit of 8,000, though there were more than 12,000 at the fifth-round game against Arsenal five years ago. Liverpool have been allocated only 2,000 tickets. The ground is accessible by car on one side and by bus locally as "the Narrows". Bailey is concerned that the route could be choked by thousands of ticketless supporters, making access difficult or dangerous for those with tickets. "We are fully prepared,"

Chelsea lead eight in the running

IN THE 124-year history of the FA Cup 21 clubs have won the trophy only once and though eight of them have reached this season's fourth round, the draw has kept them all apart. So the chances of 1996 seeing the number of One Cup Wonders reduced to 20 are currently quite high. Chelsea and Leeds United, although both are facing away ties, look reasonable bets for the Cup anyway, while the chances of Coventry, Wimbledon and Southampton should not be discounted. Charlton, Ipswich and Huddersfield may be longer shots but every possibility must be considered in a competition once won by Old Carthusians, Oxford City and Derby and the Royal Engineers. It is worth noting that, of the eight clubs mentioned, five won their finals against the odds. The biggest upset, moreover, was the most recent - Wimbledon's defeat of Liverpool at Wembley in 1968 - although Coventry's triumph over Tottenham a year earlier was arguably the most dramatic. The other three clubs - Leeds, Charlton and Huddersfield - were all involved in poor finals. Indeed Huddersfield's encounter with Preston at Stamford Bridge in 1923 moved one observer to write that the crowd were "badly used and badly entertained for a three-shilling admission". And they did not even have a Jumbo-tron. David Lacey

Charlton Athletic Cup winners 1947

Cup winners: 1947 (beat Burnley 1-0). Fourth-round opponents: Brentford (home). CHRIS DUFFY's goal six minutes from the end of extra-time brought the Cup to The Valley 49 years ago. Only an extraordinary set of circumstances would see Charlton in the final this season but they have hit a rich vein of scoring form and did beat Sheffield Wednesday in the last round. 1996 prospects: Slim.

Chelsea Cup winners 1970

(beat Leeds United 2-1 in replay after 2-2 draw). Fourth-round opponents: QPR (away). CHELSEA created history in 1970 by winning the Cup at Old Trafford after the first Wembley final to go to a replay. A better side than they were a year ago, they are capable of going back to Wembley and winning the trophy after losing the final to the Double winners Manchester United in 1994. 1996 prospects: Strong.

Coventry City Cup winners 1922

(beat Tottenham Hotspur 3-2). Fourth-round opponents: Manchester City (home, Feb 7). COVENTRY'S dramatic defeat of Spurs nine years ago provided one of Wembley's happiest nights, and Sutton was still two seasons away. They are unlikely to win the Cup a second time this season but Ron Atkinson is the manager for the big occasion and may feel Manchester City are there to be taken - eventually. 1996 prospects: Slight.

Huddersfield Town Cup winners 1992

(beat Preston North End 1-0). Fourth-round opponents: Peterborough (home). HUDDERSFIELD won the last pre-Wembley final through a disputed penalty at Stamford Bridge and against a background of threatened cuts in players' wages. Peterborough have their own history of Cup wins but Huddersfield's League form suggests a place in the last 16. 1996 prospects: Slim.

Ipswich Town Cup winners 1978

(beat Arsenal 1-0). Fourth-round opponents: Walsall (home, Feb 6). IPSWICH may be nothing like the side who won the Cup so impressively in 1978 but their victory at Blackburn in a third-round replay will stir some familiar vibes when Portman Road is playable. Just so long as Ipswich remember that Walsall are the original plantkillers. They beat Arsenal, too. 1996 prospects: Slight.

Leeds United Cup winners 1972

(beat Arsenal 1-0). Fourth-round opponents: Bolton (away). LEEDS should have won the Cup more than once but Liverpool did for them in a dramatic 1965 and Sunderland gloriously denied them the retention of the trophy in 1973. Having won 2-0 at Bolton a month ago they ought not to slip up today but their defending is erratic and not in the Cup-winning tradition. 1996 prospects: Good.

Southampton Cup winners 1978

(beat Manchester United 1-0). Fourth-round opponents: Crewe (home). TWENTY-year-old memories of the goal from the late Bobby Stokes which took the Cup to The Dell are still warm, and the way Southampton saw off Portsmouth in the third round suggested that some of the club's instincts are still there. But Dario Gradi's Crewe, second in the Second Division, are a good footballing side all the same. 1996 prospects: Fair.

Wimbledon Cup winners 1988

(beat Liverpool 1-0). Fourth-round opponents: Middlebrough (away). THIS WAS Wembley's most recent major upset and it is still hard to believe that Wimbledon won that day, given the relative strength of the teams and the way Liverpool had played that season. But Wimbledon did, deservedly, and given Middlebrough's recent slump they may win again now. 1996 prospects: Fair.

Asprilla move sub rosa

English, although he understands a little, and it's going to take time for him to settle in," said Sir John. "He will need a translator and he is bringing a housekeeper from South America." Any sense of unease at St James' Park would be perfectly understandable, for several major deals involving temperamental foreign players have collapsed at the eleventh hour in recent times, notably Everton's bid to sign the celebrated Brazilian Muller. It is now clear that David Batty will have to give up his entitlement to a loyalty bonus if he wishes to move between Blackburn Rovers and Newcastle. Although Blackburn rejected a bid of £3.5 million from the Premiership leaders earlier in the week, they will sanction the sale of the former England international if Newcastle's offer is increased by £500,000 and if Batty actually asks for a transfer. After his omission from the side last weekend it is unlikely Batty will play for the Lancashire club again, but reports that he has effectively been on strike for the past few days are clearly exaggerated. Batty may have spent pre-

A N Other

TAKING his name from a Union general of hirsute fame, this skilful Bristolian first earned recognition when he performed half-time ball-juggling during an early televised European match. While his playing career never quite lived up to that, he brought a degree of subtlety to countries Black and Strong, and places painful and inspiring. Then he went home twice, so to speak, before performing a final U-turn. Last week: Peter Noble (Newcastle United, Swindon, Burnley, Blackpool).



Performance of the week: Eric Cantona (Manchester United), the coolest head at West Ham on Monday.

TEAM SHEET

TODAY Bolton v Leeds United Chris Fairbrother returns after a two-match suspension to face his old club but his fellow defender Gerry Tappart, who has also served a ban, is unavailable after suffering an ankle injury in training. Leeds are missing the services of the forwards Tony Darge, Richard Johnson and John Montebano. Charlton v Brentford Charlton's defender John Humphrey is available again after suspension but faces a struggle to displace Steve Brown who impressed in the 4-1 win over West Brom last week. Everton v Port Vale Jon Royle, encouraged by an unbroken starting lineup but has Andy Hutchinson replacing David Unsworth on the substitute bench for the holders. Vale's defender Andy Hill is struggling to shake off a thigh injury. Huddersfield v Wimbledon Huddersfield's manager Brian Horton has a full-strength squad to select from after a testing break in Spain. The winger Rodney Rowe is likely to make his starting debut as Steve Green will be without the club captain and key central defender Steve Maitland who has a groin injury. Tottenham v Walsall Tottenham's goalkeeper Ian Walker has recovered from the stomach upset while the captain Gary Mabbutt and Chris Wilson have both been declared fit after injury. The central defender Ned Embrey is set to be recalled by Wolves. West Ham v Grimsby Town Dale Gordon, who has fought a two-year battle against a knee injury, has been included in West Ham's 15-man squad which also includes Frank Lampard star, son of the assistant manager Brian Lambert. SHEFFWOLD Sheffield United v Aston Villa Villa's manager Brian Little retains the side which beat Tottenham 2-1 on Sunday which made that Tony Johnson will continue to be under the spotlight. Dwight Yorke and Steve Maitland.

Scottish preview

Celtic spot a silver lining THE weather forecast last night was as keenly awaited as the next episode of a soap opera as Tenness Scottish Cup aspirants wondered how the elements would treat their prospects. With only three of the scheduled 14 venues for the third-round ties blessed with under-50 anticipation, there was widespread anticipation of disappointment. It was around Pittodrie Stadium (where Rangers play Keith from the Highland League), Easter Road (which houses the all-Premier Division collision of Hibernian and Kilmarnock) and Firhill (accommodating Hamilton v St Johnstone) that the optimism swirled as heavily as the snow. Celtic's encounter with Whitehill Welfare tomorrow afternoon is also due at Easter Road and, a bizarre exception, should not be at risk. Arguably the most intriguing tie of the round which sees the entry of the big names into the competition - that between Motherwell and Aberdeen at Fir Park - is due to take place next Tuesday. Celtic, as holders of the old-

est trophy and the most prolific winners in its 122-year history, are probably the most fearsome opponents any small club could draw at this stage. Even without players such as Andreas Thom and Phil O'Donnell, both recovering from injury, Tommy Burns's resurgent side is expected to be far superior to the amateurs and semi-professionals from the Midlothian village of Rosewell. "It took us long enough to get our hands on the cup again," said Burns, an allusion to last May's final victory over Airdrie which brought a trophy to Parkhead for the first time in six years. "We intend hanging on to it. Nobody will take it away without severe resistance." Rangers have Stuart McCall, missing for seven weeks because of injury, back in their team. "We will field the strongest side available to us," said Walter Smith. "If we didn't it would be like the gimmick betting the bookmakers seem to be promoting about how many goals Celtic and ourselves will score - an insult to the smaller clubs."

Diary... covers tracks Chase... the front-runner... and Milton fire first shows... ne-lap race to Atlanta

Sports Guardian

AGASSI'S CONQUEROR TO MEET BECKER IN AUSTRALIAN SHOWDOWN

Chang dashes into final

THE FORCE was with Michael Chang, right, as he overcame a limp challenge by the defending champion Andre Agassi in their Australian Open semi-final yesterday.

Chang won the all-American encounter 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 and meets Boris Becker in tomorrow's final after the German also enjoyed a straight-sets success over the unseeded Australian Mark Woodforde.

As Monica Seles, the overwhelming favourite, prepared for her final with Anke Huber, Agassi appeared to be going through the motions for much of his match with the fifth-seeded Chang, who goes into his third Grand Slam final.

Becker was in vintage form, overpowering Woodforde by 6-4, 6-2, 6-0. His last Grand Slam victory was here five years ago.

David Irvine, page 8



When crossed lines are left to a third eye



David Lacey

IMAGINE the scene at Wembley on Sunday June 30, the day of the 1996 European Championship final. England and Germany are level at 2-2 and the match is in its 100th minute. Suddenly Anderton crosses from the right and Sheringham's shot hits the underside of the crossbar. Shearer, instead of following up, is so convinced that the shot has bounced down over the line that he turns away in celebration.

The Germans protest and urge the Swiss referee to consult the nearest linesman, who appears to give a nodding assent to an England goal.

But the Germans are still not satisfied and the referee decides to consult his Third Eye, an official watching the television replays behind bullet-proof glass.

He decides that, even when seen from all manner of camera angles, there is no conclusive evidence that the whole of the ball has gone over the German line. So England's goal is disallowed.

"Was it over the line or not?" asked one writer reporting Hurst's second goal against West Germany in the 1986 World Cup final. "It was all a matter of speed of eye."

In football it still is, but for how long? This week Rugby League announced plans to introduce an official in a monitor booth for all televised matches who will make the final decisions on controversial incidents.

The Football Association has reacted coyly to the suggestion that a similar system might be introduced into football: in addition, that is, to the one operated by Sky's Andy Gray, the game's answer to 'You've Been Framed'.

The issue of making decisions during a match after consulting a television screen is quite separate to the question of video evidence being used in disciplinary hearings.

Yet the fact that the Rugby League made its announcement soon after Steve Lodge,

the referee of West Ham's match against Manchester United, had missed a two-footed tackle by Dicks on Cole seconds before he sent off Butt for a lunge at Dicks, highlighted the increasing difficulties officials face.

Television has become the eyes in the back of the referee's head and the possibility of making this official is surely worthy of debate. For only by exploring the logic of such a proposition can football demonstrate its impracticability.

Unlike the rugby codes, soccer is not a stop-start game. Its attraction lies in its natural flow and crowds become impatient at interruptions. Rugby League reckons that a decision taken off a TV screen can be reached in 30 to 45 seconds. In a football match this would be an age.

IF SUCH a measure were to be introduced its use would be limited. For even now most of the decisions referees take are matters of opinion which TV may challenge — and often does in such matters as off-sides and fouls committed around the edge of the penalty area — but not necessarily disprove.

Even with more cameras a Third Eye still might not have been able to show whether or not Hurst's shot crossed the line. The goal Maradona punched past Shilton in the 1986 World Cup quarter-finals would have been disallowed, but at the risk of God's wrath.

Controversial decisions used to be seen as part of the luck of the game but now, with millions of pounds sometimes at stake and referees instructed to caution and disallow where once they merely awarded free-kicks, human error is less acceptable.

Yet to what extent can TV be allowed to right wrongs — in effect take over from the referee? In Germany two Bundesliga matches have been replayed because the cameras proved that "goals" did not actually find the net, but such instances are extremely rare.

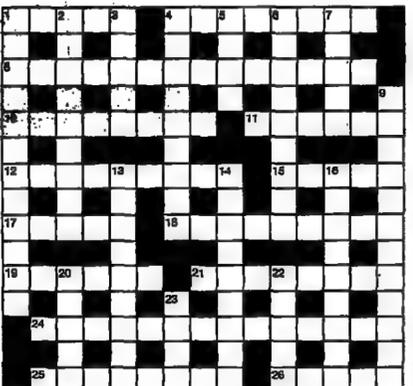
Perhaps, when digital TV is fully operational, the answer will be to station Andy Gray in front of a screen showing 10 games simultaneously. As Pichman General he could be consulted through the mobile phones all referees would be required to carry.

Even if this did not reduce the number of controversies it would at least leave the PMG more sympathetic to the tribulations of Greek air traffic controllers in August.

Guardian COLLINS Crossword 20,560

Indispensable to all crossword addicts! A copy of the brand new Collins Thesaurus, the ultimate browser's wordfinder, will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to Guardian Crossword No 20,560, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER, by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday February 5.

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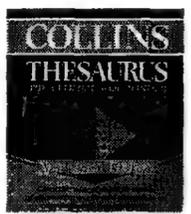
Set by Araucaria

Across

- 1 Mystify backers with a month's leave (5)
- 4 9 is the place for a film (2,5)
- 8 In possession of Egyptian port, which leads to a concession (5,4,4)
- 10 Almost a gentleman? Chances for a meal and a show? (5,3)
- 11 A mountain and an island with a European magistrate (6)
- 12 Rustic who can turn round and taxi back (4-5)
- 15 Imitate the sound of a hill (5)
- 17 Start but don't set off? (5)

Down

- 18 Died, employee who keeps his eyes open (9)
- 19 Infection could be happy (6)
- 21 Ship gets a hearing from central inspector (8)
- 24 Handel's work makes old pound note clothe Diana in company (8,6)
- 25 Instrument of change among leaders of psychiatry (8)
- 26 See 23
- 1,20 9 for the empty stable? (5,6,5)
- 2 Contents of big box, if used for vegetables and corn (4,5)



- 3 French writer, cat, or horse (5)
- 4 Sequel of exploit in 10, nothing further required (4,5)
- 5 Note from a girl (4)
- 6 Compiler's hit the mark as a legendist (4-5)
- 7 Sphere of rational or irrational number (5)
- 9 Secretly ruled by Yorlist or Lancastrian? (5,3,4)
- 13 New Labour action for sort of gardens (9)
- 14 Study of serenity by numbers reduced to logarithm of an unknown (9)
- 16 Appertition of elephant as mammoth (9)
- 20 See 1 down
- 22 Men (Latin American) is a cause of sickness (5)
- 23,26 Various trees in a lot — Orange, for example (4,5)

CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,560

ACROSS
1 MYSIFY
4 9 IS
8 IN POSSESSION
10 ALMOST A GENTLEMAN
11 A MOUNTAIN AND AN ISLAND
12 RUSTIC WHO CAN TURN ROUND AND TAXI BACK
15 IMITATE THE SOUND OF A HILL
17 START BUT DON'T SET OFF

DOWN
3 CAT
4 SEQUEL
5 NOTE
6 COMPILER
7 SPHERE
9 SECRETLY RULED BY
13 GARDENS
14 LOGARITHM
16 APPERTITION
20 SERENITY
22 MEN
23 TREES
26 TREES

Euro ban lifted but the fight goes on

Martin Thorpe finds England now trying to retrieve the docked Uefa Cup place

TOTTENHAM and Wimbledon had their European ban overturned by Uefa yesterday. Now the English soccer authorities will set about getting back the Uefa Cup place which was also taken away as punishment for the Interoto Cup fiasco.

Uefa's decision to swap the one-year bans for fines represented a face-saving exercise for European soccer's governing body who, in many people's eyes, should have exonerated Spurs and Wimbledon totally.

The clubs did field weakened teams in the Interoto but the Football Association and Premier League believed they had Uefa's permission to do so. This was one of the central points made by the high-powered English delegation at yesterday's appeal in Geneva.

Uefa had spent the previous four days studying the comprehensive submission made by the FA and Premier League and yesterday took only 20 minutes to downgrade the clubs' punishment to a \$50,000 fine for Tottenham and \$50,000 for Wimbledon. It was previously agreed that the fines, which with costs add up to around £180,000, would be shared between the 20 Premiership clubs, who will each contribute £9,000.

"Based on the facts and the comprehensive documentation, the board decided that the sanction imposed was too severe," said a Uefa spokesman.

But the Tottenham chairman Alan Sugar, while

relieved, was not ecstatic. "I don't see this as a kind of victory," he said. "It means that we have a record which will remain in Uefa's archives — if you like, we've taken the rap for a gross misunderstanding."

"The reason we entered was to protect British football from the punitive measures [threatened by Uefa] of banning all our clubs from Europe that could have devastated the game in this country."

"It's a bit like us being accused of robbing a bank when we hadn't, then being found guilty, but then being told not to worry because the police would pay the fine."

Wimbledon, too, were disappointed they had not been cleared totally. "It's like putting out a fire that we didn't start," said Ned Hamman, brother of the club's owner

Sam. "The fine is nothing to do with our club but Uefa couldn't back-track. We did enter in good faith and feel aggrieved."

Premier League clubs have already rejected the chance to enter this summer's Interoto Cup but have not ruled out competing in the future.

The FA and Premier League will now go about the delicate task of trying to retrieve the Uefa Cup place which Uefa had docked the Premier League as earlier punishment over the Interoto. "That was desperately galling," said Keith Wiseman, an FA councillor and member of the delegation, "because the place we lost had been given to us for fair play on the field over many matches."

"Also it was an administrative decision taken by the Uefa executive committee almost on the basis of about five scrappy bits of paper they had. It wasn't a disciplinary hearing at all with any right start," said Ned Hamman.

Because there is no right of appeal, "we're going to ask Uefa gracefully if they will reconsider," said the Premier League's chief executive Rick Parry.

It will be a tricky manoeuvre. Uefa has become unpredictably punitive of late, and the English delegation's decision to swallow yesterday's medicine in part reflected the desire not to upset Uefa any further.

Indeed, Uefa's increasingly autocratic approach to its powers and rights is becoming a cause of concern among many national associations in Europe.



Sugar... mixed reaction

Freezing weather cuts into cups and the weekend programme

THE Big Chill has already frozen out three of today's FA Cup fourth-round ties and four of the fifth-round Pilkington Cup rugby matches, with morning inspections the rule in most other places, writes Chris Cartain.

Highfield Road's lack of underoil heating did for the all-Premiership tie pitting the blue Cities, Coventry and Manchester. But perhaps the biggest disappointment came in the North-east where Rob Andrew saw his return to

the rugby union centre stage go into cold storage with Newcastle's Pilkington tie against Harlequins.

The other FA Cup ties to go were at Swindon and Ipswich, with Reading optimistic that their plum game with Manchester United will go ahead. In the Endsleigh League, the games at Watford and Colchester are already off.

In racing, Lingfield's all-weather Flat meeting is the only survivor.

Scottish white-out, page 11

We win on goal difference

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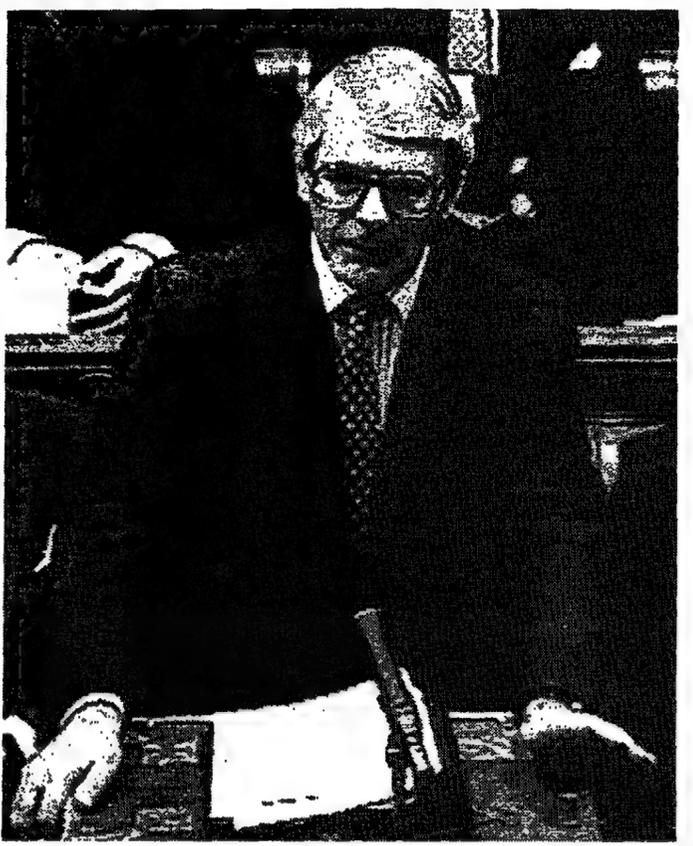
17	INTERVIEW	19	CONTEXT	21	MONEY	24	FINANCE
	York's other duchess — novelist Kate Atkinson		Bruckner: The bumpkin who became a holy fool		Danger: 40 million savers suffer falling rates		Could Claudia sell Europe on the Euro?

13
Saturday January 27
1996

The Guardian Outlook



They blew hot, they blew cold, they see-sawed up, then down. Tony Blair and John Major lashed out at one another, education the battleground. But who came out on top? MICHAEL WHITE scores the bout after a very tough week at the despatch box



Head-to-head in the House

THE Tories are already proclaiming the past week as a turning point — yet another one — in the Government's bedraggled fortunes. They may even be right. But what was indisputably clear by yesterday is that this thing is getting personal.

At bottom, Tony Blair despises John Major for trimming with every passing wind which seeks to blow his cabinet off course. John Major thinks Tony Blair is a middle-class, public school humbug whom a street-smart Brixton boy can beat.

Each thinks the other's weakness, personal and political, may prove crucial to an increasingly presidential election campaign in which they will be tested relentlessly by their opponents and a frantic, deregulated mass media determined to resist the spin doctors' agendas.

Hence Blair's refusal to drop Harriet Harman in the face of uproar on the Labour benches over her choice of distant St Olave's for young Joe, and the Labour leader's fearless insistence on resuming the offensive over education at question time on Thursday.

"If you can't address the main issue of the day, you might as well give up," he explained to doubting colleagues, adamant that New Labour's message of educational opportunity and diversity will overwhelm the Government's tacky record long after the Harman affair and prime ministerial jibes are forgotten.

Yes, it had been his "toughest week" so far, he told the Daily Mirror yesterday. More significant was what Blair said next. He had seen Major's promising to stick by a position "through thick and thin — and then they don't. I think that does more

damage to credibility than anything."

"The difference between us," he told Major on Tuesday, "is that I will not buckle under pressure." Labour MPs got the same message at the Harman showdown at the weekly meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP). There is a Thatcher-esque self-certainty in all this: Blair as Conviction Politician. "He has balls of steel," as loyalists put it.

Significant too was Major's, his descent into personal attack, a string of those knee-in-groin soundbites he purports to despise. They had Tory MPs genuinely delighted at his despatch box performance, not once but twice. Evident here is a touch of wily Harold Wilson: Major as Tactical Opportunist.

Perhaps the late Colonel Marcus Lipton is to blame. As Labour MP for Brixton since 1945, he got young John his first ticket to the Commons' public gallery, helping to make him a teenage politics junkie. But he also embodied what Major came to see as condescending, social-list attitudes — almost feudal, his

once said — towards ordinary people, the Harman attitude as he now sees it.

Thin-skinned as ever, a 16-year-old school-leaver himself, Major hates being patronised, but likes to be liked. Blair's family roots (and his wife's) are as insecure as those of the Major-Balls. But the system was kinder to their upward mobility. The Labour leader emerged a more self-confident winner, albeit — thanks to his father's dramatic illness and his own Christianity — well aware how easy it is to be a loser.

It is the classic, middle class reforming mould which will be evident on Monday night when he marks the 10th anniversary of the Archbishop of Canterbury's explosive Faith in The Cities report with a speech which will again feature education.

So the personal contours of the battle are clearer than a week ago and Major looks to be back in business, at least by recent hallowed standards — as Blair always knew he would be. 24 per cent poll leads notwithstanding. But how important will this week look when the dust has settled, let alone

in hindsight, when the votes have been counted on April 10, or May 1, 1997?

For Blair it has not simply been a tough week, but a bad week, which started when the Harman story broke last Saturday. It is not an Old Labour vs New Labour row, nor a left-right or North-South row. Though there are elements of all three, the lines are muddled, as they often are when mucky parental choices are involved. Tottenham's Bernie Grant is hardly Blairite. Voters are divided too.

In laying his own authority on the line by supporting Harman's choice — "doing the best for her child" — rather than engineering her resignation, Blair ensured that Wednesday's Parliamentary Labour Party meeting would rally. It has invested so much in him as the vehicle of its election victory that it had rather less choice than Harriet and Jack. Unity is all.

Harman has her friends and admirers at Westminster, plus some who rallied unenthusiastically to her side out of loyalty. Below the surface, however, anger remains widespread, not all of it sour,

egalitarian, blockish anger either. "It's the good mother who hates," one Labour MP complained. "She wants it both ways, to put her child first and her career first."

Such resentment will have its say in November's shadow cabinet elections, if they are not cancelled. It has two further ill effects. First, it costs the Labour leader personal goodwill, which he does not have in abundance. "When he hits trouble in government, a lot of people won't be there for him," says one leftwinger.

IN FACT the "Blair crushes rebels" spin on his speech to the PLP came from an Evening Standard headline writer, not the party spin doctors, who were offering reporters a more emollient "mood has turned" gloss after realising how much ground the leadership had to recover in the PLP. But one senior MP confided, "I've never heard a leader's speech worse received. People didn't want this macho stuff. They wanted something more intellectual, not 'Once more unto the breach, dear friends'."

Second, the row enabled the Tories to reopen the case against New Labour as the shifty packaging on an unconstructed party, eager to stifle voter-aspersion with union power and bureaucracy. It gave them the hit they seek on "stakeholding" for Conservative Central Office is busy this weekend on a new "Hypocrisy Watch". But the idea that Blair intends to chat hammering away at education thrills them. "Yes please," they chortle complacently.

Thus, the absurdly counter-productive attacks made on Harman in Wednesday's NHS debate helped rescue her. Tory whips lost control of their troops. That sort of silliness amounts to a crucial plus for Labour. If the cabinet really thinks (as its election strategy session did midweek) that a combination of rising disposable incomes and St Olave's will rescue them this time, it is dangerously self-deluding.

If educational opt-outs are to be an issue then we will hear more about the cabinet's kids, most of whom (Major's included) were opted out from the private sector. As Tory MP

George Waiden never tires of saying, no wonder the stats sector in Britain feels neglected and its test results patchy.

Several of the week's other developments must give the Tories more cause for pause than Labour. The Blairista tone of Paddy Ashdown's call for two party/two term co-operation on Monday night opens up the nightmare vision of Lib-Lab government for years. It also helps shore up Blair against his own leftwing, though Ken Livingstone insists radicals in both parties will unite to harry him.

Ireland too is a mixed blessing. Notwithstanding John Hume's indignant charges of foot-dragging and obstructive tactics to buy Unionist votes at Westminster, Major looks statesmanlike on the peace trail. If all-party talks materialise as the ceasefire holds, it could yet win him a timely pre-election Nobel Peace nomination.

Blair has been supportive, but it will be Major's triumph. Yet his brisk rewriting of the Mitchell report this week in favour of an elected forum caused anger beyond the Em-

erald Isle, underlining the risks of failure.

By contrast the news from Europe, that the timetable for a single currency by 1999 is slipping amid Franco-German recrimination, looks like a vindication not for Majorite activism, but agnosticism. So it is, and the continuing sniping against Ken Clarke must make party managers grateful for a respite.

But it also costs the Prime Minister one of the best cards in his election hand, just as the Soviet collapse cost the Tories their tried-and-tested defence ace in 1992. As the holdfast of the surviving one-nation Tories, Clarke will remain a target anyway. Yesterday's Sun reported that the chancellor was bad-mouthing Tories for saddling him with the £29 billion public spending splurge before the last election.

The day before the FT was saying that Clarke had been isolated at the cabinet's election strategy session and behaving "like Major's triumph". Yet his brisk rewriting of the Mitchell report this week in favour of an elected forum caused anger beyond the Em-

Hollow applause for Major the matador

Can Prime Minister's Questions be reformed? SIMON HOGGART doubts it

Prim Minister's Question Time these days resembles a televised bullfight. The aficionados in the ring applaud each elegant pass and deadly thrust, while the viewers find it disturbing and even disgusting.

Those of us watching John Major demolish Tony Blair twice this week, live from the press gallery, felt Major had never been more effective. I doubt if viewers at home thought the same. Like many ancient, cobwebbed

British traditions, Prime Minister's Question Time is a recent invention. Gladstone and Churchill never faced it. Macmillan was the first, though it was a courteous affair in those days with MPs often genuinely seeking information.

It was Harold Wilson who saw it could be used as an election tool. His assaults on Sir Alec Douglas-Home were never broadcast, but they cheered the troops behind him mightily and helped rebuild Labour morale.

Margaret Thatcher called the session her "hotline" to the British people and cancelled lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays to prepare every possible answer. There were always two separate

audiences. Each side wants their leader to succeed on their terms; how the other lot responds is of more marginal importance. So last Thursday Blair pleased troops with a more-or-less coherent statement of the case against the Government on education. Tories had a different agenda; they wanted Major to cash in ruthlessly on Harriet Harman, and that he did.

But there is now a third audience, at home. To them, jokes such as Major's "the leader of the Opposition and I have something in common — we don't invite John Prescott to our meetings", may seem cheap debating points, however much MPs howl with joy. TV reporters

cannot say "the Prime Minister wiped the floor with Mr Blair" even if he did, and on TV a point must be hammered home or else it hasn't been made at all. And TV news is both brief and egalitarian, so each stroke of Major's had to be answered. No wonder honours were at least shared on the six o'clock news, and some of us felt Blair won.

There are periodic attempts to reform Prime Minister's questions. Major has tried halfheartedly, and Blair has suggested a single 30 minute, in-depth session. These plans won't work; the pressures of the modern permanent election campaign will see to that. Meanwhile we should sit back and enjoy the fight.

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EMU: our flexible friend

THE reality behind the will-they-won't-they, pre-nuptial dances among aspirant members of Europe's monetary union club is that as long as the present economic slowdown doesn't turn into a full-blown recession the project will probably go ahead. Every other day seems to bring a change of emphasis. Earlier this week reports that influential people like Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, former French president, were having doubts about meeting the Maastricht criteria on time were greeted joyfully by Tory Euro-sceptics. They saw it as the beginning of the end of the strict timetable laying down that countries must form a credible currency union by 1999, before establishing a single currency by 2002. Today the prospects change yet again, with Ian Traynor's report that Germany remains strongly committed to launching the single European currency on schedule in three years' time, but will not agree to watering down the strict terms for entry, even if that means only a hard core of EU members joining initially.

This is difficult to square with yesterday's admission by the German government that the slowdown in economic growth will push the country's budget deficit up to 3.5 per cent this year compared with the 3 per cent deficit laid down at Maastricht. If this carries on, Germany, which is very keen to join, won't qualify on her own strict criteria, while the UK which isn't keen to join will. Of course, it all depends what you mean by strict application of the Maastricht criteria. Euro-spin doctors are quick to point out that it isn't nearly as black-and-white as its critics suggest. Article 104c allows the Commission to decide whether a deficit in excess of 3 per cent is "exceptional and temporary" or whether a deficit "exceeds government investment expenditure", implying that deficits caused by investment spending might be dealt with more leniently than those caused by consumption outlays. So if Germany or France had a budget deficit above the 3 per cent ceiling but found their economies were suddenly expanding as Europe moved out of its cyclical downturn they would qualify. But if the current slowdown in activity turns into a full-blown recession then all bets would be off and the timetable would have to be extended or even abandoned. It is easy to paint a disaster scenario by extrapolating the woes of a few European companies in difficulties like Fokker and Olivetti compounded by masochistic fiscal retrenchment by governments risking social disturbances in order to board the Maastricht bus. But where otherwise are the siren signs of recession? Companies are very profitable by historic standards and are not suffering from the really

heavy stockbuilding which presages a slump. Inflation is cowed if not actually dead, with no imminent sign of resurgence. Europe has been hit by a worldwide slowdown aggravated by fiscal retrenchment. But, just as the US is recovering from a similar slowdown, there is no reason in principle why the same shouldn't happen to the EU. France, now sporting a healthy trade surplus, has just recorded her second year of positive growth (around 2.5 per cent) and seems set on keeping as close as possible to the Maastricht timetable despite last year's street riots which seem to have faded a bit from governmental memory. Germany has lowered interest rates several times and has agreed what may turn out to be a trend-setting "confidence pact" with unions and employers under which lower taxes on employment are to be traded for increased jobs (though not necessarily in manufacturing industry). Bonn is urging EU governments, employers and trade unions to do something similar in order to create millions of new jobs over the next few years. Europe may have fallen quite a bit behind the US in terms of exploiting the information revolution and it may be loaded with expensive social overheads but there is still life left in the old dog yet. If Germany wants to be surer of economic revival, there is a simple solution. It should drop interest rates still further in concert with other leading European countries. There could be no better advertisement for eventual union than displaying a bit more togetherness during the critical years leading up to it.

The Importance of being Ernie

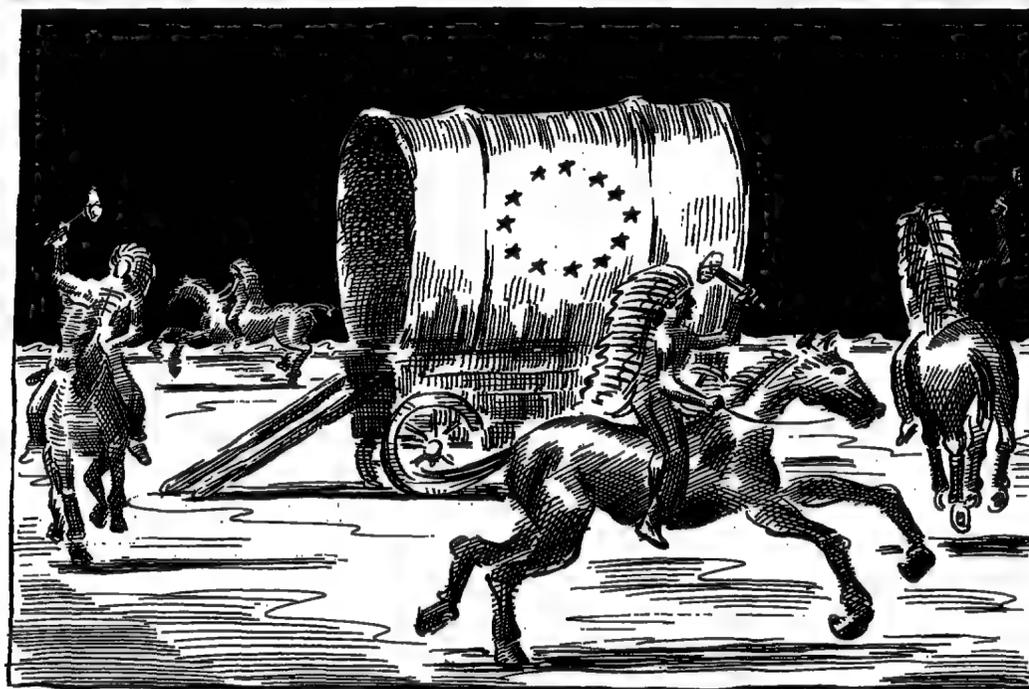
AS LOTTERY mania reaches another crescendo this weekend, let us pause to take stock of what — gambling apart — has undoubtedly been something of a business success story. It has pulled in £1.8 billion in each of the last two years, made millions of dozens of anonymous people, bestowed small fortunes on others and shelved out over £3 billion in prize money.

We are talking about premium bonds. Introduced by Harold Macmillan in 1956, they have offered punters the chance of participating in a lottery without losing their stake money. In theory this ought to have been a stakeholders' paradise, but it was not to be. In the 1980s and 1990s they bumbled along selling a few hundred million a year without creating any national excitement. It appeared that the hack psychological view of gambling — that deep down punters prefer to lose rather than win — had been proved. Without the prospect of losing all its money, this nation of gamblers was just not interested in these bonds which distributed what would otherwise have been interest payments as prizes but which allowed you to keep your stake. What kind of kick is that supposed to give? Then along came the prospect of the lottery which could have blown premium bonds out of the water. National Savings, which runs them, responded by raising their largest monthly prize to £1

million. Suddenly sales shot up from around £250 million a year during the second half of the 1980s to £1.8 billion in both 1994 and 1995.

National Savings has just announced changes to make bonds more competitive. There will be fewer prizes each time. There will be fewer prizes each time (350,000 instead of 390,000) but more bigger ones between £500 and £100,000. This innocent change has thrown serious investors into a tizzy. According to the authoritative Lex column in the Financial Times, this juggling of the prizes means that professionals investing the maximum of £20,000 can no longer be assured of getting a more-or-less statistically guaranteed return of 4.75 per cent from the large number of small prizes available. Such a rate comfortably beats the return of a building society. Obtainable from a building society. Although premium bonds may have lost their appeal compared with bonds or shares, Lex admits that they are at least "a less effective way of pouring money down the drain" than the lottery.

There is a lesson somewhere. The Government taxes lottery income even though it is itself a surrogate tax since its proceeds are spent on things not normally financed from taxation. The Treasury says that it is merely recouping tax revenue lost from other sources affected by the lottery's success (like the pools). But since, as a result of the lottery, the Government is raking in £1.8 billion a year from premium bonds, this argument no longer holds. There is a strong case for Kenneth Clarke to exempt lottery income from tax to release more money for good causes. But don't bet on it.



There's safety in numbers

Searching for a perfect union is a problem America faced in the late 18th century, one that has parallels for Europe and the single currency, argues MARTIN WOOLLACOTT. Illustration by PETER TILL

BENJAMIN Franklin observed during the Constitutional Convention in 1787 that it had been difficult at times to know whether the sun was rising or setting on the American union. The same could be said of Europe today, as it tries to decide, as America was then deciding, whether and how to go beyond "a league of friendship" to "a more perfect union".

The parallels between America in the late 18th century and Europe in the late 20th are distant but in some ways intensely relevant. The most important is that the American union was consolidated in an atmosphere of impending danger, by men with

a sharp sense that their continent was vulnerable to the worst kind of developments if it did not organise itself properly to meet internal and external threats. That this is true of Europe is a lesson only just being re-learned, so accustomed is the luckier half of the old continent to the idea that its safety and prosperity can never be seriously harmed.

Europeans learn of the latest obstacles to monetary union with a certain weariness but, perhaps, inside, with the beginnings of a slow panic. It is obvious that somebody has got something wrong. That something could be the "timetable" — dreaded word — for one money, or the means that have been chosen to pre-

pare for a single money, or the single money project itself. If they were frank, most Europeans would admit that they do not know what one money would mean for their own wealth and security as individuals, for that of their countries, or for that of Europe as a whole. Equally, they do not know what will happen if all, or some, states of the union retain their separate currencies. Money, after all, is a mystery, but it is a mystery on which life itself depends. House, pension, savings, job, business: money touches everybody and everything, long before the generalities of national and economic sovereignty are broached in high-minded discussion.

If our leaders are mismanaging this matter, then we are indeed in trouble. Interestingly, money matters bore hard on the American states in the period between independence and convention. There was a recession, unrelenting paper money floating about, and vast problems of debt, which even led to violence and rebellion. American leaders like Hamilton were quite

Clive talks tough to Tony

Rattling the bars



Ian Aitken

HAVE always regarded Clive Soley, Labour MP for Hammersmith, as a thoroughly radical sort of fellow who deserves better treatment from his leader. If proof of this proposition were required, Soley delivered it on Wednesday at the Parliamentary Labour Party meeting on the Harman affair.

In the course of his speech he called on Mr Harman to resign because of her decision to send her boy to a highly selective grammar school. But in doing so, he seems unwittingly to have hit upon a radical new education policy for Labour which would simultaneously upstage Gillian Shephard and save the taxpayer lots of money. Gordon Brown must have been delighted.

Soley's argument was that as a lad he had been to precisely the kind of rough, tough inner-city school which Ms Harman was seeking to escape by sending her son to St Olave's. Violence and bullying had been the norm, he is reported to have said, and the experience had prepared him for real life to an extent which more privileged schools couldn't have matched.

If Soley is right about this, the duty of an incoming Labour government is plain. They must instantly ensure that all state schools, and not just those in the inner cities, put bullying and violence on the curriculum. The children of the leafy suburbs — the offspring of those middle classes for whose votes Tony Blair is currently bidding — should no longer be denied this essential training for the real world.

Soley himself provides convincing evidence of this. Having left his ruffianly school and been turned down by pretty well every university in the land, he eventually got into Newbattle Abbey, an adult education

college near Edinburgh. There was no holding him after that. He won academic honours from not one but two universities, and describes himself as "a classic late developer".

Mr Blair (who went to a notoriously ruffianly school too) will be grateful for that. Clearly, he should now ask David Blunkett to step down so as to make way for a new education spokesman in the person of the victorious member for Hammersmith.

□ THERE has always been a pleasing sameness about the Daily Telegraph, especially on its letters page. Indeed, a man I know claims that when he is put in charge of the Committee of Public Safety after the revolution, he will immediately send for a list of everyone who has ever written a letter to the Telegraph and have them shot. Though he admits there'd be a few injustices, he reckons that at a stroke he'd get every potential counter-revolutionary in the land.

But in the days before its present editor took charge, the paper was usually funny by mistake, and very rarely on purpose. Under Charles Moore, however, it is trying to be funny. The results are distinctly odd.

Thus yesterday's Featherston diary claimed to see a striking resemblance between Simon Heffer — until lately the Telegraph's Majoring deputy editor — and the 13-year-old Essex girl who ran away to marry a Turkish waiter. It even suggested that the runaway might actually be young Heffer.

But this wasn't quite up to the standard of the previous day's paper, which carried a bizarre leader asserting that the editor of the Catholic Herald employed the word "pussy" to address members of his staff. Besides implying that the ladies' sheets were too short, the writer also proposed some alternative usages.

Among them were "mouss-mouss", "rabbitt", "munchkin" and — no kidding — "I am an incredibly lustful person". If this is a sample of Mr Moore's sense of humour, let's hurry back to all those Colson and Rear-Admirals RN (Retd). They were essential funnier, as well as more comprehensible.

□ THE death of Gerry Fitt's wife Susan breaks up a wonderful partnership. Lord Fitt is rightly praised for his courage in the face of death threats from both sets of Ulster killers. But Lady Fitt was just as brave.

Smallweed



CONSERVATIVE Central Office has unveiled a new campaign on the back of Labour's embarrassment this week which is aimed at pointing out differences between what Opposition

politicians do and what they say. This is such a terrific idea that Smallweed has decided to copy it and launch its own version: "That's what we call hypocrisy!"

For example, what about the five Conservative MPs who were on their feet, baiting Ms Harman during last week's health debate in the Commons: Hartley Booth, Robert Hughes, Patrick Nicholls, David Tredinnick and Graham Riddick.

Of course, this indignant quintet — members of the bang 'em, flog 'em, back-to-basics brigade to a man — have had their own brush with inconsistency over the years: lovesick "poems"; adultery; drink driving; cash for questions and cash for questions, if I remember rightly. All together now: **THAT'S WHAT WE CALL HYPOCRISY!** Further suggestions welcome. A bottle of champagne for the best.

THERE are many questions raised by Harriet Harman's decision to send her son to St Olave's grammar school. Wasn't the Oratory good enough for the lad? And why would a supposedly enlightened liberal couple send both their offspring to single sex schools, one of which operates a strict policy of religious segregation? This is the 1990s, after all. Curious.

But the biggest mystery about the affair is that if the schools in Southwark are so bad why has the former head of the council's education committee, ex-Labour councillor John McTernan, just been given a job by Harman as her special policy adviser?

WORD reached the soon-to-be privatised Gatwick Express (the nation's most over-priced rail journey at £8.90 for a 30-minute trip)

that the Sussex airport is about to welcome more flights from Africa. This set eager executives thinking about how to tap this new market and make our African friends feel at home.

The resulting abomination, or should that be marketing master-stroke, is expected on platform 14 at Victoria station soon: a train painted to look like a zebra.

THERE appears to be no end to Michael Forsyth's desperation to wrap himself and the moribund Scottish Conservative Party in the St Andrews Cross. The Scottish secretary was spotted this week laying a wreath at the statue of Robert Burns on London's Embankment for the benefit of countless press photographers. This, in case you didn't know, is a bit like rolling your easter egg down Edinburgh's Royal Mile on Christmas

morning. Presumably, Mr Forsyth knows that January 25 was Burns's birthday. The anniversary of his death is July 21 — which usually falls during parliament's summer recess.

ALL THIS stuff about free movement of labour under the single European market is very well. But it doesn't cut much ice with officialdom at the Palazzo of Westminster as they seek to protect MPs from assorted bomb-throwers who have not yet stung the six Mitchell Principles. Joyce Quin, Labour MP for Gateshead East, recently applied for a Commons pass to allow a young volunteer to gain work experience in her office for a couple of months. Normally clearance would take about three weeks. But the volunteer's name is Jean-Louis Gilbert. That can only mean one

thing to eagle-eyed custodians: a foreigner. "Since the applicant was born in France, I should warn you that enquiries in this case can take up to three months," wrote the deputy Sergeant-at-Arms. Ms Quin has replied, seeking to assure them that young Gilbert is not a bomb-thrower, but the nephew of Daniel Percheran, an old Strasbourg MEP colleague, now a Senator of France.

SMALLWEED wholeheartedly supports a new effort to rid football of sectarianism but fears it may be heading for the rocks. "The 'Boys Against Bigotry' campaign was launched earlier this month by Celtic's chief executive Fergus McCann after a band of his team's supporters ignored a minute's silence for the 86 Rangers fans who died in

the Ibrox disaster 25 years ago. (Bad taste is not the preserve of Celtic fans; for years the Ibrox legends appeared to believe the best way of spurring their team on was to sing "Would you like a chicken supper, Bobby Sands?" to the tune of "She'll be Coming Round the Mountain").

"Bigotry is a problem for society and regrettably football is all too often a vehicle for people to promote their extreme views. We want rivalry, not hatred," McCann says and the Celtic fans are right behind him. Some have taken to wearing T-shirts bearing the slogan "Boys Against Bigotry — Take a Hum to Mass".

A STEE battle of Newbury entails a new month, defeatism has enveloped those charged with protecting the proposed by-pass. Security guards at the site have been

given a sad, not to mention illiterate, booklet with the following instruction: "If a protester spits at you, then in the eyes of the law that is not assault what you must not do is retaliate, the same goes for verbal abuse. They have verbal abuse off to a slugging match it becomes very repetitive, and they are better at it than you." It would bring a tear to a wooden eye.

DESPITE the execution by firing squad of John Albert Taylor, the spirit of liberal rehabilitation still has a place in the American judicial system. A defendant in a New York court, immediately after being sentenced to life, asked the judge for an indication of how long it would be before he was released. "Put it this way," the judge replied, "Your parole officer hasn't been born yet."

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Hey, waiter, another round of big ideas OK?



In the rich tradition of Jean-Paul Sartre (left) and Bernard-Henri Lévy (right), PAUL WEBSTER contemplates a Paris café's decision to offer philosophy to its regular drinkers and thinkers



PHOTOGRAPH (RIGHT), NERVE BRUHAT

for abstract thinking since the New Philosophers (Deleuze, Bernard-Henri Lévy, André Glucksmann etc) started dismantling Marxism in the seventies. A superficial count of philosophical schools since the Greeks amounts to at least 100 Isms, but with Pharisism, as it might be called, are we talking about relevant new ideas, or some astute self-publicising marketing inspired by the pro-

"There is a crisis in the moral sciences, but Sartre and others like him — Alain Finkielkraut, for instance — preach that philosophy has more relevance to everyday life and art than at any time in history," Lefort added. "Book sales of philosophical subjects seem to prove the theory."

This is a view that would not be disputed at Le Café des Phares, overlooking the heart

of political revolution; an ideal place to watch recent mass street protests while rethinking contemporary society at a loss for a leftwing figure of stature since the Marxist, Louis Althusser, murdered his wife and had to be interned because of his paranoid ideological distress.

Philosophers have never been shy of living up to a media image, with Sartre on his barrel backing Renault strikers or Bernard-Henri Lévy strutting around Sarajevo with his shirt unbuttoned to the navel, persuading Bosnians to die for freedom. Television has been an incredible boon for professional gurus, convincing governments to mobilise philosophers for committees ranging from ethics to mortgage rates, while no self-respecting politician would miss the chance of shaking the hand of a thinker of the same ideological persuasion.

On the other hand, the manager at Le Café des Phares, Pascal Ranger, has yet to be convinced that philosophical debates can enlighten his life, even if much of Sartre's *l'Étre Et Le Néant* was inspired by the comings and goings of the Flare's garçons. Despite a predestined name, making him sound like a member of an intellectual law and order posse, Pascal Ranger takes his day off on Sundays when the Flare's shut their orders for another round of ideas.

HE benches at the back of the Café des Phares on the Place de la Bastille are covered in red leather like the seats in the Café de Flore in Saint-Germain-des-Près where Jean-Paul Sartre invented existentialism to ease the hardships of the German occupation.

On a winter weekday evening, the Phares' red leather is about the only clue that this dull-looking refuge opposite the Bastille Opéra House has become the philosophers' salon, taking up a distinguished line running through Le Frocpe, the Café de la Paix, the Deux Magots, the Flare and a host of sub-parlours.

On Sunday the Bastille

Guttons for punishment: Olestra could put American consumption of fatty snacks, already gargantuan, on to a new and even grosser plane

It's the American dream come true, a tasty fat you can eat for ever and yet never put on weight, the sort of wonder product dieters the world over have fantasised about, says JONATHAN FREELAND. But Olestra has one embarrassing drawback, a slight question of leakage...

Eat until you seep

ANAL leakage and fecal urgency are not words that go well with food. Loose stools and abdominal cramping can't be much good for business either. They are not sensations one would want to advertise on the label of a new food. Especially when the US Food and Drug Administration is in question could change the way we eat for ever.

Yet this is the price Procter and Gamble will pay for finding the dieter's Holy Grail: fat-free fat.

This week, after two and a half decades of struggle, the US Food and Drug Administration gave P&G a green light to market Olestra, the wonder substance which cooks and tastes like fat — but which passes through the body as if it were fat-free. Within months, the company will be selling American crisps and biscuits that taste like the real thing, but with half the calories and a fraction of the guilt. Moves to bring the revolution to Britain are expected soon.

The decision has brought delight to those who see Olestra as a solution to the eternal conundrum: foods which are bad for you taste the best. But the FDA's move has also drawn fire from nutritionists who say Olestra is a "crazy idea" and that it causes cancer, heart disease and even blindness in the elderly.

That's in the long term. For now, there are those embarrassing side-effects including the evocatively named fecal urgency (defined as the need to go *right now*). Under pressure, the Feds have demanded that Olestra cooked snacks become the first food item in

the US to carry a health warning: "Olestra may cause abdominal cramping and loose stools. Olestra inhibits the absorption of some vitamins and other nutrients."

The warning is the culmination of one of the greatest sagas in the history of US food. Secret laboratories, embattled officials, and scientists with a mission have grappled for more than 25 years to satisfy an American public that wants to have its cake and eat it — to consume what it likes and to stay Hollywood slim. For Olestra has already invested over \$200 million in research, and hopes to claw back half of that within a year.

Here's how it works: Olestra is not a fat substitute. It is fat, and behaves like it in the human body. Through clever chemistry, Olestra passes through the gastrointestinal tract without ever being digested. As far as the human body is concerned, the fat simply hasn't been. Olestra, wrote one commentator, "the stealth missile of fat molecules".

The genius of the invention is that, unlike counterfeit fats,

it doesn't degrade or break down when heated. That's what makes Olestra a breakthrough: it can be used as a cooking oil in frying, serving up the mouth-watering prospect of fat-free chips and crisps. Under the licence granted this week, Procter and Gamble will be limited to selling snacks cooked in Olestra. Eventually they hope to market the miracle product as an oil, under its commercial name Olean (slogan: "No fat, no compromises") so that people can cook with it themselves. If that happens, the dietary habits of America and beyond might truly be transformed.

For the moment, only one man has rustled up a full Olestra dinner. Master chef John Folse of the ch-ch-ch LaFite's Landing restaurant



outside Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was asked to prepare a special Cajun menu for Procter and Gamble executives — using only Olean.

He stunted on nothing, laying on the local specialties, Louisiana seafood gumbo, pan-sautéed fillet of speckled trout and fried soft-shell crawfish. Mardi Gras chocolate cake was the dessert.

"Louisiana dishes are so dependent on oil," Folse says now, in an accent as thick as his gumbo, "and we do so much sautéing and frying, that I was pretty sceptical. But I tasted no difference whatsoever. It's gonna be a natural. Who would not, if they had the opportunity, create wonderful salad dressings, sauté fish or a nice medallion of veal with a fat-free oil? Naturally, they're gonna jump on it."

No such haste characterised Olestra's entry into the public realm. On the contrary, scientists have laboured on this overnight sensation since 1969. In the best penicillin tradition, biochemists at Procter & Gamble's Miami Valley research campus discovered it by accident. They were actually looking for a nutritional supplement for premature infants.

What they saw was that once six or eight fatty acids were attached to a sugar molecule, enzymes could not do their usual job of cutting them apart. The molecules simply passed through the intestines without being absorbed. Olestra fitted the bill perfectly.

Better still, Olestra had the same texture as real fat, the same "mouth feel". The scientists began to experiment, putting on their aprons and cooking with Olestra. "We tried out all kinds of foods, and this material was just a perfect substitute for fat," said Fred Matson, a member of the original research team.

But a problem soon surfaced. In painful fashion, in its prototype form, Olestra was so liquidy thin, it passed right through the body and came out in the form of the dreaded anal leakage. One witness at the FDA urged the Feds to ban it by conjuring up the image of a college athlete discovering his shorts had been stained — and suffering acute humiliation in the locker room.

P&G insist they have corrected that trouble by making Olestra more viscous. And, they say, Olestra hardly invented anal leakage — some people suffer the problem when they consume too much fat of any kind.

Even so, there were enough other flaws in Olestra to have kept the issue stalled between the Food and Drug Administration and Procter and Gamble for the better part of a quarter of a century. The struggle finally came to an end on Thursday, when the FDA's head, Dr David Kessler — already a sworn enemy of the entire tobacco industry by seeking to regulate cigarettes as drugs — gave the qualified go-ahead to Olestra.

In one move he rejected the claims that Olestra had no

business in the food supply of the US. "This is the first food additive with negative nutritional value," fumes Michael Jacobson, director for the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a group which previously targeted popcorn and pasta in creamy sauces. It actually flushes nutrients out of a bear gut, they'll say. This is the most serious attack on Olestra. It relates to the chemical's knack for picking up "passengers" on its way through the digestive tract. Vitamins A, D, E and K, all have pretty sceptical, but I tasted no difference whatsoever. It's gonna be a natural. Who would not, if they had the opportunity, create wonderful salad dressings, sauté fish or a nice medallion of veal with a fat-free oil? Naturally, they're gonna jump on it."

Still, other risks remain. Olestra washes out carotenoids, the nutrients found in green vegetables that are suspected — though not proven — to help safeguard against prostate and lung cancer, heart disease and muscular degeneration, the ailments which often rob the elderly of their sight. P&G has not been

Soon crisps will be on sale that taste like the real thing, but with half the calories and a fraction of the guilt

asked to compensate for the carotenoids because no one is yet certain of their purported benefits. "That's a very serious problem," warns Jacobson.

Even the defenders of Olestra are hesitant. Bruce Chassy, a food scientist who sat on the federal panel that recommended Olestra's approval, fears that consumers, reassured that an Olestra-cooked snack is fat-free, will simply eat more of them or "compensate by eating other foods" — the Diet-Coke-and-a-Doughnut syndrome. "My own personal preference would be for people to switch to healthier snacks, like fruit and vegetables," he says.

The odds probably remain high, for Americans seem reluctant to give up the fatty foods which evolution has conditioned us to find delicious (it's fat which kept our ancestors warm and fuelled). Americans consume too much fat of any kind.

Man Shape Undergarment, which nips, tucks and sucks the flesh in all the right places. They'll buy the Butt Booster or the Man Band, and work out at the gym; they'll suffer liposuction. But eating habits seem as stubborn as a belly: they will not shift. This, after all, is the country where voters demand low taxes and more spending. Americans want to have it both ways, and Olestra — the Ronald Reagan of nutrition — seems about to give it to them.

Taking the class war to the classroom



Martin Kettle

WHAT would have happened if Harriet Harman had decided instead to send Joe to nearby Dulwich College? Granted, it might not have been exactly popular in the Labour ranks. But at least she couldn't have been

charged with breaching party policy, as she was over her choice of a state grammar school. For Labour has made its peace with private education and the Dulwich Colleges of the world. Did I say peace? The right word is surely surrender.

To put it mildly, this is a paradox. New Labour is the party of one nation, of inclusivity, of stakeholders. These are the constantly reiterated terms by which it defines itself, and for which it should be applauded. But how can you have a one-nation society with a two-nation education system? How can it be inclusive when the non-payers are excluded from the best schools in the land? How can a privately educated hold a stake

in the nation whose public system they so conspicuously spurn?

Old Labour had an answer to these questions. That answer was abolition of private education. The problem, however, was that Old Labour huffed and puffed about the private sector but could not actually bring itself to do anything about it. I don't remember the Labour governments in which that great egalitarian Roy Hattersley served in the 1960s and 1970s getting anywhere near the task. On the other hand I do remember that a number of the most distinguished members of the Wilson and Callaghan cabinets continued to send their children to private schools.

Abolition is still what most Labour people would like today. Dislike, not to say hatred, of the private schools remains deep in the gut of most British socialists, whether dogmatist or pragmatist. It is, to borrow another New Labour word, a defining question, and rightly so. I have little doubt that if you conducted a poll in the party about the future of private education there would be an overwhelming majority for strong measures.

It is important to remember why this is so. It is not educational envy alone which drives this feeling. It is the conviction that the private education system is the supreme corridor of national power. It is the proven knowledge that it is the exclusive entry ticket to privilege, wealth and authority in our society. It is the fact that it is the prime engine for reproducing the British class system. When Conservatives criticise the left for using education for the purposes of social engineering, never forget that the private school system is far and away the most efficient and established tool of ruthless social engineering ever devised.

So there we have it. On the one hand a demonstrably divisive education system of immense power, on the other a deep sense of outrage at the maintenance of such a system. An important wrong that needs righting, and a powerful will to achieve it. And what do we get from Old Labour and New Labour alike? Nothing. No strong measures, and precious few weak ones either.

Here is the paradox again. Education will be the passion of my government, says Tony Blair, and all the evidence confirms that this is genuinely felt and believed. Why else did Blair stand by Harman so firmly and then lead on education once again at Thursday's disastrous question time, if not because he sees it as Labour's great theme? Education is central to New Labour economic strategy, as every speech by Gordon Brown bears witness. No one doubts that David Blunkett at educa-

tion will be at the front of the queue for any Labour spending plans. And yet on this pivotal issue there is almost no effective policy whatsoever.

As presently constructed and financed, the private education system ridicules Labour's aspiration to create an inclusive, opportunity-based society. It must be obvious to them that the passion for education and the passion for social cohesion are not on a convergent course. Put it another way. Unless Labour can redistribute the power of private education, Blair's wider project will simply not succeed. It cannot be ignored. There has to be a policy.

constructive course, and one which depends on understanding the true goal: not to shut schools, but systematically to weaken the monopolies of private sector privilege, principally by promoting the public sector in competition with it.

This is going to require a mixture of blunt instrument, cajolery and threat, as well as money and a lot of time, for no shift in the education system is easily or quickly accomplished, as our present disconcerting show will take at least the 10 years that Paddy Ashdown was talking about this week, and probably more.

It will also take will and ingenuity. By all means weaken the fiscal privileges of the private sector in due course, but only when a real start has been made in transforming standards in the public sector. This is more easily said than done and requires a lot of new thinking to build on what Blunkett has already started. Labour needs to recognise some of the lessons of the Harman affair here, one of which is that, especially in some

parts of the country, there are tens of thousands of parents of all classes who, whether Labour likes it or not, will always put meritocratic aspiration above commitment to community in their choice of schools.

Labour has to find new ways of bringing equality of opportunity and meritocracy together, while avoiding a return to the crude post-1.1 binary academic divide of the old system. If it does not, the divide between the meritocratically-based private sector (plus a few state schools like St Olave's) on the one hand, and the egalitarianism of the public sector majority on the other, will continue to widen and not narrow.

There is no credible long-term alternative way of weakening the unacceptable social power of the private sector. If it continues to ignore this challenge, Labour may end up not with the one nation it seeks but with two, and its education crusade will crumble at the walls of the New Jerusalem, all passion spent.

Kate Atkinson is only the second woman in 10 years to win the Whitbread prize, with a novel that has got right up men's noses

Big sister of the anti-family

The MEGAN TRESIDDER



INTERVIEW

ANOTHER book award, another controversy. This one took time to get underway. With a full 24 hours elapsing between the announcement on Tuesday night of the Whitbread prize and the first shots being fired, but by the end of the week it was going great guns.

Daily Telegraph, Julian Critchley — one of the judges who had backed Roy Jenkins — said he thought Atkinson won because the women members of the panel voted for shock. As a result, he said, "We wuz robbed."

The heroine and narrator is Ruby Lennox — ironically named, for she is too clever by half and no jewel in the eye of her mother, Bunty, a woman disappointed by her marriage to George, who has a floozy. She will also eventually find a lover in Mr Roper next door.



Meeting Atkinson is like looking forward to Yorkshire pudding and getting something spiky, like sushi, instead

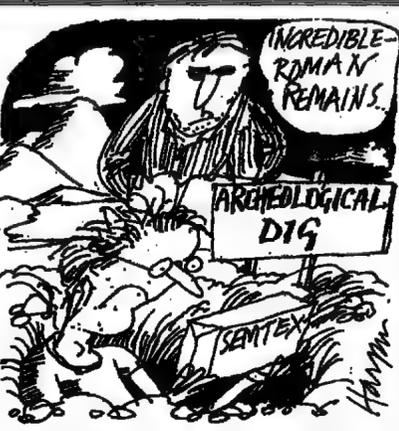
Photograph by GRAHAM TURNER

very frustrated." She became a supporter of the Greenham Common women, turning up for the day to protest with them and — on one occasion in 1982 — was arrested with them. Eventually, she left her marriage in the late 1980s, moved to Scotland and decided at the age of 40 to "stop messing about doing part-time jobs and writing for magazines and take myself seriously as a writer. So I got an accountant. If you behave as if you have money, it will come, I know this."

A Roman fort found on Gaelic soil has cast doubt on a cherished myth. FIACHRA GIBBONS digs for answers

They came, they saw, they turned on their heels and ran

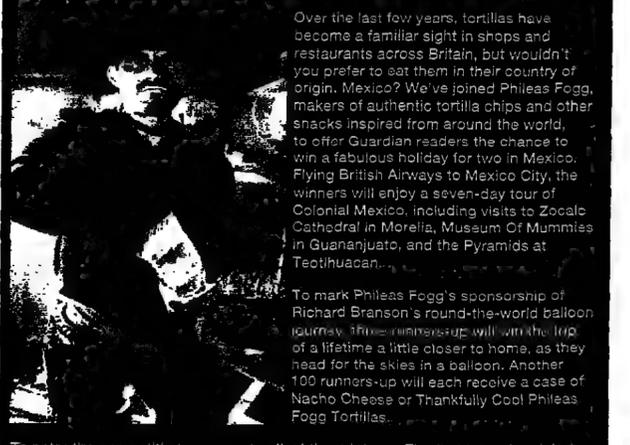
FOR all of us convinced it was the Catholic Church which corrupted Ireland, it comes as a hammer blow to discover the other Roman may also have penetrated Mother Erin and even built themselves a nice fort with views of Dublin Bay.



World Experience, a vast barbarian theme park of horrors, not unlike an awayday break to Bootle. It was probably sold as the holiday to hell, a country where it rained 360 days a year and snowed on the other five.

logical dig, the circumstantial evidence for the holiday camp is strong. It is hard to visualise the misery of first party newly arrived from Castra Devana (Chester) on the overnight galleys. In 10BC, or as we Irish scholars like to say, 1000BS (Pre-spd). Full to the gills with duty-free Pontine wine, they would have faced the full Irish breakfast of crubeens (boiled trotters), grout soup and drishen (sheep's blood in pig's bladder). Just as today, Irish food was awful, and there was loads of it.

Discover the tortilla in its natural habitat. Win a trip to Mexico.



Over the last few years, tortillas have become a familiar sight in shops and restaurants across Britain, but wouldn't you prefer to eat them in their country of origin, Mexico? We've joined Phileas Fogg, makers of authentic tortilla chips and other snacks inspired from around the world, to offer Guardian readers the chance to win a fabulous holiday for two in Mexico.



try Diary

18 ARTS

Rap? Just a bit of talking to music, isn't it? Not at all, as GARY YOUNGE found out when he went to rap school

Mind the rap

SCORES of young and trendy people are homing in on a grammar school in south London to get to grips with the three R's — rap, rhyme and rhythm. The school — Ghetto Grammar. Its mission — to raise the level of hip hop culture in Britain with the help of evening classes in rap and DJing, to be followed this term with classes in breakdancing and graffiti art.

black radio stations which occasionally allows listeners to phone in and rap away, and a few have even performed at jams. A couple were shy and embarrassing to watch, but most — even those who would call themselves novices — were talented, self-confident and fluent enough to make anyone who can't rap (like me) feel very square and desperate to learn.



Rap of honour... classes at Ghetto Grammar, helping to raise the profile of Britain's home-grown rap scene. PHOTO: BARRY WEAVER

viva," says Lord Redeemer, who confidently predicts he will be rapping until he is 65. Thirteen-year-old Linda Nartry — rap name Microdot — heard about the school on the radio. "It's great to come here and just to see how other people do things and pick up tips. I used to rap together with my friend at school. I don't actually want to be a rapper. I just enjoy doing it and would like to get better."

Middlesex University. "I used to freestyle a bit if I heard a track that was really good and sometimes rapped on Choice FM when they have their phone-in sessions," he says. "Ghetto Grammar is a brilliant way of just keeping up with new styles and rhymes." The lessons are fun. At the beginning, the students sit in a circle and one of the instructors explains what they are going to work on that evening and how it can be refined and

integrated into a rapper's own work. After a few examples they then call the students into the centre to perform either on their own or in pairs, while they shout encouragement and criticisms from the side. "Look at the audience, not the floor." "Speak up." "Keep going, when someone runs out of rhymes and dries up. Occasionally they will creep up behind the students while they are performing and grab hold of their arms, forcing them to

use their bodies more imaginatively while they rap. Outside the classroom, in newspaper columns and sociology departments, debates rage about the misogyny and violence with which rap has become tainted. But in the classroom of Ghetto Grammar, there seems to be no moral crisis, just 20 young people growing in confidence who, in the words of Seamus Heaney, "try to see [themselves] to set the darkness echoing".

What's Paul Merton playing at pretending to be Tony Hancock?

Paul palls in comparison

Television Nancy Banks-Smith

CRIME pays much better than it did in 1989. In Tony Hancock's version of Twelve Angry Men, a juror's pay is thirty bob a day. "More than I get on the outside," says a delighted Sid James. That natural use of the word outside suggests Sid's underpants are stamped Stolen From The Scrubs.

In Paul Merton's updated version, what with your emoluments, your increments and your four-star unleaded, a juror can make 60 quid a day. (Sixty quid, child, is 40 times 30 bob. For God's sake, what do you do in school?) Paul Merton in Simpson and Galton's Twelve Angry Men (Carlton) — a title which suggests the star, the script-writers and several agents fighting in a sack — is the first of eight comedies from the sixties. Five of them originally starred Hancock.

having the sort of featureless face which can look anything but old. Hancock was 35 and Merton about 38 when they made Twelve Angry Men. And that is a surprise as Merton looks much the younger. At that orange juice as a child, I imagine. Ian Elislop once called Merton a dangerous alien from the planet Stroppy. He is given to soaringly surreal flights of fancy and dive-bombing beligerence. As an actor, he is solid wood, however you slice him. The Mabel Fernely award for Grace and Charm of Movement will, alas, never be his. The Victoria Cross, possibly. It took nerve to risk comparison with Hancock.

But there is no comparison. Hancock was an exploding star. There is nothing like him. You could argue that the scripts deserve a modern, polished production. When Hancock starred, the only production credits were incidental music, designer, producer. Voilà tout. Merton's production credits are: recording studio, original music, casting, production manager, graphic designer, production buyer, make-up supervisor, costume designer, camera, sound, lighting, vision control, videotape editor, production secretary, stage manager, production assistant, senior floor manager, designer, produced by arrangement with producer, and director. "I'll tell you this. It's not 20 times funnier. I have discovered that nobody south of the border understands a word Rab C Nesbitt (BBC3) says. I set a contest with three questions. What does Rab mean by 'Less Ming than minging'. What is 'Out on the dip' and what is in Rab's pie? Scots were excluded, of course. Not one Englishman replied. Not one Scots did, some lightly daubed with English blood in a primitive attempt at disguise, one with pitiful deviousness posing his entry from Prague. Bastards! What the Rab's pie contains, according to last night's show, is the tangled remains of those done in by the Cowan Godfather. A more telling argument for devolution I never heard.

Reviews

THEATRE

Slaughter City

The Pit

NAOMI Wallace's Slaughter City, which gets its premiere in The Pit, is a compelling play that unites two elements in the American tradition — the radical and the mystic. It reminds me of anyone it is the Walt Whitman who wrote of "the audacity of freedom" and the need for America to free itself from the anti-democratic European past.

The play is a passionate protest against exploitation. Set in a meat-packing plant, it shows workers hosing down pigs' heads, pulling loins, sweeping offal. Here people work longer for less, have neither contracts nor unions and are at the mercy of bosses. The autocratic employer, Mr Baquin, alternates between cruel humiliation and token paternalism involving out-of-hours fitness classes and environmental projects. But her play, unlike Odette's Waiting for Lefty, is no simple exhortation to strike. She takes on board race, gender and the inter-action of past and present. At the centre of her play is the sexually ambiguous figure of Cod, who urges the workers to action and who turns out to be the daughter of a textile worker who jumped to her death in an industrial

fire at the turn of the century. Wallace's mix of reality and dream is superbly wielded in Ron Daniels's production. Her larger point is that the flames of radicalism represented by Cod must never die. Admittedly, the mixture of genres doesn't always work — the allegorical figure of the Sausage Man, who seems to represent capital, appears to have stepped out of a 1920s German Expressionist drama. But the play has passion, poetry and a wild strangeness. Wallace also writes highly effective individual scenes. In one scene, a boy worker who lusts after a black colleague is allowed to kiss her only when he sheds his macho pride and dons a woman's dress.

Running through the play is the Whitmanesque idea that sexual and economic liberation are inseparable. In Ashley Martin-Davies's design, the meat-packing plant is both grimly actual and a metaphorical hell. And, among the cast, Olwen Fouere is rivetingly androgynous as the metamorphosing Cod, with strong support from Sophie Stanton as a besotted colleague and Lisa Gaye Dixon as a militant black packer. Most cheering of all is Wallace's adventurous attempt to redefine political drama in terms of a feminist surrealism. Michael Billington

This review appeared in some editions of yesterday's paper

POP

Gene

Shepherd's Bush Empire

FOR A hand considered one of Britpop's also-rans, Gene have an ardent and magnanimous following. They're certainly ardent enough to snap up tickets from touts who had infiltrated the tube station platforms, and magnanimous enough to give support act Duffy a good reception. Stephen Duffy has been doing Britpop since the mid-eighties, when it was known as pop, and made a well-received comeback in 1995. But his airy songs of London high-life, so refreshing at an acoustic gig last summer, worked less well with a clanky band in the depths of winter. Gene operate within the same deeply melodic, trad-pop parameters as Duffy, but the difference is that their singer is Martin Rossiter. He's an excessively thin character who would be lopsided if his black suit weren't so uridy. Rossiter projects to the galleries in a dolorous tenor that's

a dead ringer for Morrissey's, and accentuates it with theatrical hand gestures. The impression is of an anguished soul who can't resist a little camp jape, and the fans eat it up. Gene possess a similar dry humour to the Smiths. They come off the punning straits of Rossiter deals with the fans' lustful offers with an arch "Sorry, I live the life of a monk." (Funny how camp types always claim to be celibate.) But they are also very much their own people. The songs, illuminated by guitarist Steve Mason's brisk, crunchy play, lean toward the anthemic. That's Gene's ace in the hole — heard once before you can sob along like a pro: "It's my time to go! This one by the dead" and "London, can you wait for all the things I have to say?" What distinguishes Gene from other anthemic bands like Simple Minds is their lack of pomposity. You feel they would rather be playing theatres than stadiums — and can you imagine Jim Kerr dedicating a song to his mum?

Caroline Sullivan

Women making waves

Radio

Lyn Gardner

VIVA, you may recall, is the Lynne Franks-backed station that launched last year bringing non-stop aromatherapy, assertiveness training and Chris de Burgh to the airwaves. A combination clearly designed to appeal to the average, thirtysomething metropolitan woman such as HRH The Princess of Wales. Regrettably for many of us who are just longing to have our consciousness lowered, in some parts of

London it is slightly easier to receive messages from outer space than it is to receive Viva. As a result, Viva is the latest of the new commercial radio stations to run into difficulties. With the station's listenership hovering around 120,000, a programme of cuts has been implemented to keep the station buoyant until the transmitter problem has been sorted. These include the axing of Franks's own afternoon show. But do we really need a radio station for women? Radio seems to me to be one of the few areas of the media where women's voices are heard. Unlike the theatre or

film, female experience is richly reflected on the radio and nowhere more poignantly than this week in *For Colored Girls* who have considered suicide when the rainbow is ensif, which arrived around 20 years overdue in Radio 3's Sunday play slot. Ntozake Shange's choreopoem, which captures the vulnerability and celebrates the resilience of black American womanhood, was originally conceived as an all-singing, all-dancing performance piece, becoming a cult at the Berkeley Bar where it was first staged in 1974, before moving to Broadway. Under Heather Goodman's direction, the piece

worked infinitely better on radio than in an earnest staged version I saw a few years ago, the lack of visuals highlighting the intricate weave of the writing, which is both lyrical and shockingly raw. For the first 10 minutes or so I thought the sheer density of the writing, combined with the patchwork soundtrack of black American music ranging from jazz to pop and gospel, might make for an over-lush mix. It didn't. This was radio drama in full-blown, vivid colour. The pain of "not being wanted" when I want to be wanted", as it's put in "for colored girls", was also apparent in *First Person Plural* (Radio 4), the taped diaries of three young women living in a housing project for single pregnant women in Bristol.

Claire was so afraid of telling her boyfriend she was pregnant she simply popped a copy of *How To Prepare For Being A Dad* through his letter-box. Michelle recognised that she takes back seat to her boyfriend's passion for cars. "I don't mind," she said wistfully. "He comes back for his tea." Probably not when the Child Support Agency get on to him. The pregnant women in *Baby Steps* (Radio 4) fare little better with their menfolk. Geraldine's Robert is starting an affair, Shona's Ian is putting male bonding before his wife, and Yvette's Larry is in the Scrubs. I'm rather puzzled by Jenny Clair's and Julie Balloo's series, which is rather stronger on varicose veins of the labia and the dangers of high blood pres-

sure, than it is on jokes. I'd never have thought of Clair as the new Miriam Stoppard. The problem with the men in *Baby Steps* is that they haven't had the benefit of a feminist upbringing. Not that all the young men interviewed in *Sons And Mothers* (Radio 4) appreciated being raised by mums who referred them to Kate Millett every time they asked for a war toy. Bringing up a "challenge", as the American feminist Robin Morgan referred to her own son, certainly presents dilemmas for some feminists. But exactly what they are was never clearly articulated in Nick Baker's features, which failed to get beyond that all-embracing question: who does the washing up in your household?

TOM SUTCLIFFE on an inspired premiere of Love Life put on by Opera North

Golden Weill

WELL and Lerner's unknown 1948 Broadway musical is unmissable — not least because it is the direct forebear of Sondheim's classic "concept" musicals, *Follies* and *Company*. Opera North took a big risk presenting this European premiere as a follow-up to their successful *Show Boat*. Few of Weill's numbers are known, and the show disappeared when Weill died in 1950, 18 months after it finished its successful run. A strike by the music-theatre trade union Ascap had prevented any original cast



Love Life... unmissable mix of hopes and dreams. CLIVE BARF

recording, and Lerner quarried the text for other shows. No opera company here could afford the lavish scale of the original, whose budget was equivalent to Lloyd Webber's *Phantom Of The Opera*. But, even without Broadway-quality hoovers and a pair of top stars, this thinking man's guide to the American dream marriage — and nightmare — is provocative, entertaining and touching. It's a series of cameos about a standard couple plus two kids, set tautly at various stages of history from 1790 to 1948, interspersed with eye and ear-catching vaudevilles (such as *Progress*, *Economics*, *Divorce* ballet) presided over by a magician-narrator. In this central "Everyman" role the marvellously adaptable Geoffrey Dolton turns in his best performance ever, especially memorable in a yellow wig trying to have it away on a cruise ship with the ever neglected Susan Cooper, whose husband Sam is always too busy to have a real relationship (Lerner's punchy text years on the painfully autobiographical).

Love Life is a sophisticated blend of hopes and dreams, wrapped up in charmingly naive forms — and Opera North recognised that its staging demanded a special vision.

Caroline Gawn's production, with superb lighting and sets by Charles Edwards and handsome costumes by Nicky Gillibrand, is one of the most ambitious things Opera North has done. Edwards uses the painted drop-cloths and simple scenery of traditional vaudeville theatre but combines them with present-day quirks like the inset bedroom high up in an image of steam-engine pistons. The *Divorce* ballet has a memorably steamy backcloth of skyscrapers, and serious rows of chorus men and women tapping their way to the lawyers. Little hands or a fridge or a giant image of mother on a swing fly across the stage.

The texture of production numbers, chorus ensembles and telling commentary demonstrate the enthusiasm of the whole company. The high musical quality, especially Weill's precisely articulated orchestrations, is underpinned by Wyn Davies's conducting. Of the central pair, Margaret Preece's feisty Susan is perhaps a little stronger than Alan Oke's charming but always inadequate Sam. However, his *big number*, *This is Life*, is just as striking as her *Mr Right* — where the sardonic humour of the work's magical illusions really catch on.

Perspectives... The Prince of Wales' imaginative vision for the millennium — read the facts in the magazine that broadens the architectural debate. NEW and ENLARGED 100-PAGE issue on sale now at newsagents. To receive a copy direct, send a cheque/PO for £5 (payable to Perspectives) to: PERSPECTIVES, Westbourne, 20-22 St Paul Street, London WC1A 1AA. Tel: 0207 754 9111

George stubs out his cigarette and makes a kind of snorting noise in his throat and settles back into his chair to watch Bunty making his cup of tea (well, this is 1959). He clears his throat and spits into his handkerchief just as Bunty puts the cup and saucer in front of him with a glazed expression on her face. This is the expression she wears when she picks up George's socks, handkerchiefs and underpants (wearing rubber gloves) and drops them into a bucket of Dettol to soak before they are allowed to join the rest of our barely-sullied washing in the English Electric. Congratulations to Kate Atkinson, winner of the 1995 Whitbread Book of the Year. Celebrating the best contemporary English literature. from Behind the Scenes at the Museum by Kate Atkinson. Published by Black Swan @ £6.99

London... pure... his strange... argues MAR... The I... who... a hol... N

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on playing at Tony Hancock? ... alls in arison

'London is run behind closed doors by the sort of bureaucrats who used to run Eastern Europe'

KEN LIVINGSTONE, last leader of the GLC, argues the best way to mark the millennium is with a devolved government for London as well as the regions

PRINCE CHARLES' attack on the crisis of aspiration that afflicts those in charge of the Millennium Project, and the need to attract people back into the hearts of our cities, made me think that one dramatic way to celebrate the millennium would be the rebirth of democracy in London government.

(London) Bill could be included in Labour's second Queen's Speech. Many of us would like it with the Scottish and Welsh devolution measures in Labour's first one, but with more work still needing to be done on devolution for the English regions, this is unlikely to happen. Even in the event of a hung Parliament, this timetable could be adhered to. There would be support from the Liberal Democrats, nationalists and, given Lord Howe's confession that abolition was a mistake, perhaps some enlightened Tories. A new London government could come into being in the first weeks of the year 2000.

Prince Charles' views about the rebirth of our cities will be echoed by almost all Londoners. A city is a living thing. Its history carried the hopes and fears of the generations that have gone before and shaped its culture. I never think of myself as British or English. When asked where I'm from I invariably reply, "I'm a Londoner." People know and understand what that phrase means in exactly the same way as they do when someone says they are a Liverpudlian or from the Home Counties.

People know who to blame or to praise and where the buck stopped even though our powers were very limited. Having an elected authority gave all the political debates about the quality of life in London a focus. Since the abolition of the GLC, Londoners have not only seen the quality of life in their city deteriorate,

but a little bit of the soul has been lost in all of us because the city seems leaderless. It is almost as though our lives are being run behind closed doors by the sort of dull grey bureaucrats who used to run most of eastern Europe.

A new authority is to succeed it must avoid the mistakes of the past. Unlike the GLC, it should not be involved in the day-to-day administration of schools and housing. These are direct personal services that are best administered by the boroughs and nothing that the boroughs are currently individually responsible for should be

taken over by a London-wide authority. What the new body should do is take on board the things currently being badly and secretly managed by central government and its unelected quangos.

The most obvious functions are transport, including BR's services. Job creation and training are also vital if we are to tackle the endemic high unemployment that is now a feature of London life. The long-talked-about need for police accountability would be best dealt with if the new authority was responsible for the Metropolitan Police.



With his strange obsessions and his aloofness Anton Bruckner has an aura of the unknowable. Yet in this centenary year, argues MARTIN KETTLE, a little patience will bring a clearer sense of what made the composer great

The bumpkin who became a holy fool



The eyes of a revolutionary ... and, left, seated at his Bösendorfer, the man alone with his music and his crucifix

NO PICTURE exists, so far as I know, of Anton Bruckner in the company of another human being. There is something altogether appropriate about that. For of all composers, Bruckner gives us the impression of being peculiarly alone with his art. There is Bruckner. There is his music. There is God. And that's about all he wants us to know. For many it is enough. And yet Bruckner lived in the real world too. He was not just a music mystic. It may come as a shock to those who believe that he was only interested in addressing the Almighty to learn that the composer, who died 100 years ago this year, once possessed a telephone. One wonders whom he used it to speak to.

Bruckner is much more than any of these labels can ever convey. His music is among the most rewarding noise ever created by the human mind. The pictures we possess supply the stereotype of the man. Most of them show him in old age, severs, shy, the face drawn, the eyes hooded and yet far-seeing, the hair white and close cropped. Even the 1894 picture of the 70-year-old composer at his Bösendorfer grand only feeds the stock view. The prominent crucifix. The plain baggy black clothes which Vienna mocked. Above all, the man alone with his music. This was the year he completed the adagio of the unfinished Ninth symphony. Might that be the score of the never-completed finale on his piano?

Of all the great 19th century composers Bruckner still remains the most obscure. His symphonies, especially from Three to Nine, are often heard, but the London Symphony Orchestra's new Bruckner symphony cycle at the Barbican is, incredibly, the first in this country. To many concert-goers his music is still synonymous with difficulty and perverse length, in the way that the music of Mahler, with whom Bruckner was at one time misleadingly bracketed, used also to be. Meanwhile the man himself is largely unknown. There is no modern biography in English let alone the

kind of coffee-table life which now exists for most composers. Not that his life was either a private or a public mystery. Anton Bruckner was born near Linz in Upper Austria in 1824, and spent the first half of his life in the Linz region as an organist, teacher and professional musician. In 1868, shortly after the first performance of his First symphony, he moved to Vienna, where he taught at the Conservatoire, composed and enjoyed an international career as an organist. He died, much honoured, in Vienna in October 1896 and was buried under the organ in the church of the great Augustinian monastery at St Florian, near Linz.

The images which have come down to us are of a peasant, a country bumpkin, a complete social naif. We need to be careful about accepting the picture at face value. Bruckner was not a peasant but the schoolmaster's son. He had a regional accent and a country appearance and was made fun of by the Viennese on both counts, but that says as much about the Viennese as it does about him.

He was an idiosyncratic musician though he was anything but untutored in musical theory and composition, subjects which he taught for many years with great distinction at one of the most prestigious and conservative academies in Europe. True, he was Austrian

Such things were the stuff of his madness, the outward signs of the mental collapse which confined him in a sanatorium in 1877 and again threatened his very survival in the final decade. And yet we again do Bruckner an injustice if we simply say he was mad and that the madness explains the music. Is he the only composer or creative artist to be obsessed with death? Hardly. And if a preoccupation with numbers and music is evidence of madness then composers from Bach to Alban Berg were mad too.

Someone once said that the most important quality needed to understand him is patience. This is true, but not if it implies that the listener must be passive, still less if it implies the suspension of critical judgment. The patience is necessary because there is always something new to consider (which is one reason why the best Bruckner conductors — Furtwängler, Jochum, Schüricht — are speculative, while the worst try always to be definitive).

Efua Sutherland

Reaching out to young Africa

EFUA Sutherland, who has died aged 71, has been described as black Africa's most famous woman writer. She was active long before many of today's younger stars were born, as a pioneering playwright-director, community activist and patron of the arts; her stories, plays and poems have been much anthologised and translated since the sixties, winning international critical attention. In the Ghanaian cultural landscape she held a special place having been the dominant presence in theatre there for more than three decades.

Back home in 1951, she worked as a secondary-school teacher and three years later married an American, William Sutherland, with whom she had three children. In 1958 she founded her Experimental Theatre, which drew on local folklore, performing in both the Akan language and English; she was concerned with the development of a bilingual society in Ghana, so some of her children's writing is also in both languages. She established Accra's Ghana Drama Studio and in 1960 built a courtyard theatre area. Her writing was bound up with her mission to make theatre more pertinent, particularly to young people. "I started writing seriously in 1951," said Sutherland. "I can even remember the precise time. It was at Easter. I had been thinking about the

problem of literature in my country for a very long time. I was on teaching practice with my students once in a village and I got positively angry about the kind of literature that the children were being forced into. It had nothing to do with their environment, their social circumstances or anything. And so I started writing." Her first book, in 1961, was a pictorial essay for children, *The Roadmakers*, and the next year she collaborated with photographer Willie E Bell on another, *Playtime in Africa*. As an educationalist she lectured at the University of Ghana and elsewhere, and was also a popular broadcaster. She is best remembered, however, for her innovative and accessible dramatic works. *Forwa and Edufa* — both focusing on women's roles — were first performed at the Drama



Sutherland... mission to make theatre more pertinent. Studio in 1962, and her works for children include *Vulture!* and *Tahinta* (1968), which she called "rhythm plays". With the aim of involving villagers in both the production and consumption of drama, she developed *amaze-goro*, dramatised extensions of

the storytelling tradition featuring Ananse, the "spider man" trickster figure. In the preface to her 1973 play *The Marriage of Anansewa*, Sutherland writes: "That Ananse is, artistically, a medium for society to criticise itself can be seen in the expression, 'Exterminate Ananse, and society will be ruined.'" Her accommodation of traditional values and dramatic forms to cultural change has been particularly praised by Ama Ata Aidoo, Ghana's other well-known woman writer. Sutherland was involved with establishing of the Ghanaian Literary magazine *Okyama* in the post-independence era, the publishing company Afrain, and the Ghana Society of Writers. She held many key official posts and exerted immeasurable influence. Her 1980 paper aimed at bringing life and relevance to

the former slave castle in Cape Coast inspired Panafest — a Pan-African historical theatre festival, launched in 1981 and with a 1994 sequel, headlined by Stevie Wonder. "Annie Ehasz" was a supreme facilitator with a talent for organisation, maintaining Pan-African links and lasting bonds of friendship with people around the world, formidable in her enthusiasm for developing new projects, dedicated in her determination to safeguard a legacy of motivation for younger generations. In her most autobiographical short story, *New Life At Kyer-esso*, the Queen Mother, embodiment of Akan matrilineal power, recognises the need for change and breaks with tradition by letting her daughter marry a stranger, a worker, whose example has a beneficial effect on the people: "A new pride possessed no longer they were no longer

just grabbing from the land what they desired for their stomachs; present hunger and for their present comfort. They were looking at the land with new eyes, feeling it in their blood, and thoughtfully building a permanent and beautiful place for themselves and their children... "See! rang the cry of the Asafo leader. "See how the best in all the world stands. See how she stands waiting, our Queen Mother. Waiting to wash the dust from our brow in the coolness of her peaceful stream. Spread the yield of the land before her. Spread the craft of your hands before her, gently, gently. Lightly, lightly walks our Queen Mother, for she is peace."



Dawson-Shepherd: maverick

Ian Dawson-Shepherd Vision with passion

IT WAS the experience of being the father of Rosemary, his disabled daughter, which inspired the work of Ian Dawson-Shepherd, who has died aged 80. Appalled by the lack of provision for people with cerebral palsy and their families, he joined with two other parents, Alex Molra and Eric Hodson, and social worker Jean Garwood, to form the National Spastics Society — now Scope — in 1952. The society changed attitudes, and improved services for disabled people. And an initial raising of £1 million in just five years made it possible to establish schools, residential units and a network of local support groups. Dawson-Shepherd insisted that the society should be professionally run. He distinguished between volunteer directors responsible for policy and long-term planning and managers who could be left to work without undue interference. His approach could be unorthodox — in 1957 he worked with a pool company on a fundraising arrangement which earned the society £2 million annually. He also helped establish the Stars Organisation Supporting Action for People With Cerebral Palsy (SOS), and through celebrity support greatly raised the society's profile. Throughout his life he promoted research into cerebral palsy's causes, working closely with professor Paul Polak of Guy's Hospital's paediatric research unit and in 1980 securing funding from the society to develop the work. In 1980, the Little Foundation was founded to fund a £100 million global research programme into the causes of neurological disorders including autism, cerebral palsy, dyslexia and epilepsy. Although he regularly crossed swords with the society's executive council and with others who disagreed with his sometimes maverick approach, Dawson-Shepherd won the admiration of all with whom he worked. The improvement in services in the past 45 years is evident. Many people have much to be grateful for in Dawson-Shepherd's life work. We need to build on his pioneering vision. He is survived by his second wife, Margaret K. Johns, and five of his six daughters. The death of Rosemary in 1986 did not lessen his commitment; he was working almost up to his death.

Roman Cieslewicz



Image-maker... Roman Cieslewicz and, right, his 1982 poster for Amadeus at the Théâtre Marigny in Paris

Posters that stick in the mind

WHAT made Roman Cieslewicz, the eminent graphic designer who has died in Paris of a heart attack aged 66, different was his fascination with and manipulation of the photographic image. Inspired by the Russian Constructivists and the Dadaists, this Polish born poster artist and photomontageist created his very own language which relied upon a clean and dramatic use of photography to produce highly memorable images that would stand out among the decorative clutter that is the larger part of the graphic design industry. Born in Lvov, Cieslewicz studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków and then went to Warsaw to work as a graphic designer and poster maker. He rapidly acquired a first-class reputation as one of the most original and innovative graphic artists in Poland. In 1963 he moved to Paris to see, as he put it "how his posters stood up

theatre marigny



maker Alejandro Jodorowski. He formed the artistic group Panic, with its sporadically published and controversial house magazine *Kamikaze*. Cieslewicz was a true individual in his field. Even very early in his career he was plainly in a different category from his colleagues who were typical of the Polish Poster School. His clinical use of black and white, and the simplicity with which he formed his images left a strong impression on many film-makers and painters, as well as on designers and photographers. His legacy lives on, not only in his work but in the way he influenced and inspired several generations of artists and designers. Andrzej Krauze Andrzej Kilianowski Roman Cieslewicz, artist and graphic designer, born January 13, 1930; died January 21, 1996

Marcia Davenport

Scoring a hit with Mozart

THE phrase "grande dame" could have been coined for Marcia Davenport, writer and biographer of Mozart, who has died aged 62. It was while working in a lowly job on a new magazine, the *New Yorker*, that a rich Philadelphia friend Russell Davenport encouraged her idea of the first American biography of the composer and married her so that she could concentrate on it. At Scribner's publishers, Max Perkins "saw that she had skill, and from what we saw of her that she was unquenchable." So a couple of years later, she delivered the typescript and Perkins, excitedly, corrected it, his great success. Davenport was the daughter of Alma Gluck, an immigrant who was a phenomenally successful soprano — she recorded the first million seller — after being discovered by Toscanini. It was when Marcia heard him conducting Orfeo, in 1908, that she became his lifelong devotee. After a Philadelphia Quaker school, she went to Wellesley College, absconded with one Frank Clarke to Pittsburgh, had a daughter, and moved to Philadelphia. There Clarke left, never to be seen again. After her success with the Mozart biography, and her husband's co-founding of *Fortune* magazine, the couple were in contact with New York luminaries such as George Garwin, but briefly chose to move to a farm. However they soon decided that Central Park marked out the extent of their pastoral yearnings. A clomping novel about an opera singer was successful, as was a dull 800-page, *The Valley Of Decision*, about the Pittsburgh steel mills. In 1940 Davenport, alarmed by European events, was enraged by the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, and argued on radio with Alexander Woolcott who, by way of reply, coughed and died. The campaigning led her to fall in love with Jan Masaryk, the Czechoslovak government-in-exile's foreign minister. At the end of the war, she bought an apartment in Prague and revelled in being shown round the city by Masaryk in 1948 he "fell" from a window, probably in a Stalin-induced "suicide". Davenport spent more than a decade in Italy, publishing two more novels before returning to the United States. She revisited Prague in 1965 but far happier was her 1980 return when she was taken by President Havel to a Masaryk exhibition. She went alone to look through the window from which her lover was pushed. In 1987 she published her autobiography, *Too Strong For Fantasy*, the witty chronicle of somebody at one with much of the century. Christopher Hawtree Marcia Davenport, writer, born June 9, 1933; died January 16, 1996

Another Day

JANUARY 27, 1967: All trains fantastically late and crowded. A long and cold wait at Bath... In a corner a London woman coming back from [evacuation] in Devon, saying she couldn't live anywhere except in London: it's my home, see? The Canadian said he's been to London, there wasn't anything like as much damage as there seemed to be from the Canadian papers. The woman and another man sprang to London's defence, saying You ought to see the Docks. They wouldn't bomb the West End, not likely! Come over regular as buses... *Among You Talking Notes... The Wartime Diary of Naomi Mitchison, Colman, 1983.*

In Memoriam

IAN DAWSON-SHEPHERD, campaigner, born September 23, 1916; died January 8, 1996
ANTHONY HEWSON (chairman of Scope)

Weekend Birthdays

Technically, Mohamed Al-Fayed, 63 today, is Egyptian — and that's what the media calls him, usually by way of an insult. Check the detail and it says birthplace: Alexandria. Now that's different. It's a crossways city, maritime home to the international before there were jets, let

alone a jetset, so professionally mercantile for well over 2,000 years that you didn't need to be a Top Person there to appreciate the business of luxury trades, and you could hardly escape being brought up to believe that everyone, especially anyone with access to a little power, has a

price. A port of Byzantine plots and conspiracies, where empires of all kinds were founded on borrowed dinars and complex unmentioned connections. And for most of the first half of this century, a city dominated by the British Establishment at its most clique-ish. To Alexandria, Al-Fayed actually attributed only his fluency in English swearing, learnt from naval ratings come ashore. But it seems logical that an Alexandrian should end up, as he is, owner of Harrods, Turnbull and Asser, the Paris Ritz; a donor to the Conservative Party who yet accuses the Government of corruption; an anglophile furious at being denied British citizenship; and a divider of the Establishment just longing for acceptance. VR

Today's other birthdays: Gillian Beer, professor of English Literature, University of Cambridge, 61; Mairead Corrigan-Maguire, co-founder, Community of the Peace People, 62; Edith Cresson, former French prime minister, 62; Mordcahai Richler, novelist and playwright, 63; Lord Rix, actor-manager and chairman, Menap, 72.
Tomorrow's birthdays: Alan Alda, film actor, 60; Mikhail Baryshnikov, ballet dancer, 48; James Callaghan, Labour MP, 69; Melanie Clore, auctioneer and fine art expert, 38; Dr Ann Robinson, economist, director-general, National Association of Pension Funds, 53; Ronnie Scott, jazz saxophonist and impresario, 69.

Face to Faith

Not all doom and gloom

Elena Lappin

IT IS 1996, four years before the end of the century and the end of — yet another — millennium. Apocalyptic prognoses abound, but the most recent revelation that all computers are pre-set to crash in the year 2000 is perhaps the most "frightening" — and real — of them all. Computer companies are frantically working to solve the problem, but I doubt they will adopt what I believe would be the simplest solution — work on Jewish, instead of Christian time. According to the Jewish calendar, which begins with Adam and Eve (Genesis), we are now in the year 5756, nowhere near the end of any millennium. There are significant differences between the Jewish and the Christian concepts of time, especially with regard to

the understanding of the apocalypse. Crudely simplified, the distinction is as follows: it is an integral part of the Christian view that history is cataclysmic, and will reach a final stage with the victory of the powers of good in one of the many interpretations of the second coming. Time has a beginning and an end, and that end may be around the corner. Most concepts of apocalypse are based on the assumption that the final redemption is quite near, especially in insecure *fin-de-siècle* and *fin-de-millennium* times. The Jewish view is that time does not come to an end, although history culminates with the coming of the Messiah. Significantly, he will come in the real time of this world which then continues as a period of new social order on earth; a new beginning rather than an apocalyptic ending. The Jewish belief in the resurrection of the dead, which is a part of the traditional messianic prophecy, is also based on the idea of real — earthly — survival. The Christian interpretation of the "end of days" is neo-Platonic, a spiritual resurrection, whereas the Jewish understanding is firmly rooted in the physical reality of this world. Ezekiel's prophecy is perhaps the most apocalyptic text in the Jewish Bible, and has served as inspiration for much of Christian apocalyptic thought. But even there, after — or in spite of — armageddon and the war of Gog and Magog, the conclusion is anything but "final": a renewal and a return to the covenant between God and his people, and the beginning of a new era, during which all nations come to worship in Jerusalem.

How does all this relate to 1996? Around the time of this most recent new year, newspapers and other mass media tried to gauge the mood of the population by asking how they felt about the immediate future. The answers varied, but there was a clear common denominator, regardless of age, sex or any other factor: gloom. Most people expressed something I would describe as a sense of deep existential helplessness. The idea of things coming to an end, as a way of explaining why nothing works, seemed to appeal to most of those questioned. That is not the traditional Jewish approach. Rather, when things get really bad, Jews search for signs of renewal which unfortunately also leaves them vulnerable to false messianism. Self-proclaimed Messiahs have appeared often enough throughout Jewish history, often coinciding with times of deep spiritual and political crises, to make Jews wary. The most recent example of this phenomenon is the dangerous messianism of the far religious right in Israel today.

Given the general state of spiritual confusion caused by the new political complexities of the world we live in, there's a real danger in political and religious extremism, which seems to offer easy answers but leads to self-destructive patterns of individual and group behaviour. If we think of history in a fatalistic manner, we can only become passive victims of those who claim to know its course in advance. There may be a struggle between good and evil going on, but, in my view, it is not an apocalyptic struggle. Each decade brings with it its own kind of intensity — or lack of it. But we are not, I believe, programmed to perish at the end of a galactic earthquake. We may do, if we bring it upon ourselves through our self-destructive actions and the choices we make. But there is no pre-destined apocalypse in the air. Perhaps those computer engineers working on re-setting the timers offer a good example of a reasonable strategy for the future: treat the final number as an arbitrary one and simply start again. Elena Lappin is editor of the Jewish Quarterly

Doonesbury



BY GARRY TRUDEAU



مكتبة الامم المتحدة

Money Guardian

Danger — falling rates

Savers pay price as lenders look to rack up profits

Teresa Hunter and Cliff Jones

B RITAIN'S 40 million savers will see tumbling returns next week as National Savings and the building societies cut their interest rates.

Yet the societies have been making their members for years, according to Rob Thomas, a housing analyst at stockbrokers UBS. In a report out this weekend he claims societies have been overcharging customers for the past three years, making three times as much profit as they needed. He calculates that they could now afford to cut their mortgage rates, or increase their savings rates by 1 per cent, and still remain profitable and secure.

Bradford & Bingley stole a march on its competitors this week when it cut its profit margin from 2 per cent to 1.5 per cent by promising to pay savers 0.25 per cent more across its range of savings from March — and announced a similar cut in its mortgage rate.

Large lenders, such as the Halifax, greeted the move with scepticism, but admitted that profit margins may well have to fall. But Halifax general manager David Gilchrist warned that savers would be unlikely to benefit until the housing market showed some signs of recovery.

Meanwhile, Mr Thomas is convinced that building societies could act to help savers and borrowers now. He said: "Building societies are making excessive profits and have been doing so for the past three years. They could add 0.5 per cent to savings rates and take a further 0.5 per cent off

mortgage rates immediately. But until the mortgage market takes off, and lenders need to raise substantial rafts of mortgage funds quickly, savers are likely to continue to get a raw deal. Many lenders, such as the Halifax itself, the Woolwich and Alliance & Leicester can relax in the knowledge that the prospect of a big share windfall will keep their customers captive until the societies become banks.

The Alliance & Leicester this week cut its savings rates by up to 0.5 per cent following earlier cuts last month. However, its new savers, who will not qualify for shares, can earn 6.1 per cent gross on a £5,000 investment, while existing savers get 3.9 per cent.

The Abbey National, the first building society to become a bank, will cut its savings rates next week, reducing to 0.5 per cent the gross interest paid to small savers.

The Bradford & Bingley cut its margins in an attempt to persuade customers that there was no need to sell their building societies in order to profit. By boosting savings rates, the B&B hopes to remind savers that banks have generally paid them a poorer return.

This lack of competition and falling interest rates have provoked drastic cuts of up to 1.1 per cent in National Savings returns. The rate for the new series of Children's Bonds has been reduced from 7.85 per cent tax-free to 6.75 per cent. The Third Series Pensioners Bond rate has been cut to 6.25 per cent gross from 7.5 per cent.

A special concession applies to all Income Bond holders who are asked to switch to Pensioners' Bonds following



the Chancellor's decision to reduce the qualifying age from 65 to 60. Provided their applications were received between November 29 and January 25, they will be allowed to buy the last issue of the bonds.

The rate paid on the 3rd Issue Savings Certificates has fallen to 6.65 per cent and a further 0.15 per cent has been shaved off First Option Bonds to give a new rate of 6.25 per

cent. Tax-free, index-linked Savings Certificates — which formerly paid interest at 3 per cent above the Retail Price Index — now pay only 2.5 per cent above the current rate of inflation.

Premium Bond holders will also be disappointed to see the odds lengthening on a win. Increases in the number of bigger prizes have been accompanied by reductions in those

paying £50 to £100. Savers now have a one in 17,500 chance of a win rather than 15,000 to one.

Building societies have been more aggressive in competing for new mortgage business, encouraged by the low rates being offered by telephone lenders. Direct Line yesterday cut its mortgage rate to 6.45 per cent — although this is still above the 6.25 per cent charged by Brad-

Where to hatch a nest egg

Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %
Instant Access Accounts			
Teachers BS	Bullion Share	Instant	500 5.55
Bristol & West BS	Direct Savings	Postal	5,000 5.75
Bristol & West BS	Direct Savings	Postal	25,000 6.00
Skipton BS	High Street	Instant	30,000 6.50
Postal Notice Accounts & Bonds			
Cheltenham & Glos	Direct 30	30 day	1,000 6.50
Cheltenham & Glos	Direct 30	30 day	10,000 6.75
Cheltenham & Glos	Direct 30	30 day	25,000 7.10
Northern Rock BS	Postal 120	120 day	25,000 7.20
Branch Based Notice Accounts and Bonds			
Allied Trust Bank	1 Month Notice	1 month	2,001 5.90
Manchester BS	45 Day	45 day	5,000 6.25
Alliance & Leics BS	Prime 90 Deposit	90 day	10,000 6.80
Alliance & Leics BS	Prime 90 Deposit	90 day	25,000 7.10
Fixed Rate Bonds			
West Bromwich BS	Guaranteed Growth	31.1.97	5,000 6.80
Frizzell Bank	Fixed Rate	2 yr bond	2,500 6.75
Bradford & Bingley BS	Fixed Rate Bond	1.4.99	2,500 6.90
Leeds & Holbeck BS	3 Way Bond	4 yr bond	5,000 6.80
National Savings Accounts & Bonds (Gross)			
(9.2.96) 5.00%	Investment Accounts	1 month	20 5.25
5.50%			500 5.75
5.75%			25,000 6.00
(9.3.96) 6.25%	Income Bonds	3 month	2,000 6.50
6.50%			25,000 6.75
	Capital Bonds Series J	5 year	100 6.65F
	First Option Bonds	12 month	1,000 6.25F
			20,000 6.50F
	Pensioners Guaranteed Income Bond Series 3	5 year	500 7.00F
National Savings Certificates (Tax free)			
	43rd Issue	5 year	100 5.35F
	9th Index Linked	5 year	100 2.50F
	Childrens Bond Issue H	5 year	25 6.75F

Tessa tempts at the top end

THE Alliance & Leicester Building Society has set up a new Tessa account paying 6.1 per cent on a minimum deposit of £500. Savings of at least £3,000 will earn 6.2 per cent while the maximum investment of £8,000 returns 7.25 per cent.

Cashpoints

WORKERS who borrow money from their firms at non-lend interest rates are liable to tax on the perk. The amount which attracts tax is based on the difference between the interest paid by the employee and the interest which would have been paid at the "official rate" set by the Revenue. From February 6, the taxman will reduce this rate to 7.25 per cent from the current rate of 7.75 per cent. The Revenue has also reduced the rate of interest charged on late payment of tax from 7 per cent to 6.25 per cent.

LLOYDS Bank has launched a new credit card bearing the Mastercard brand. The yearly fee is waived for the first year. The interest rates are linked to the size of the debt on the card, starting at APR 21.2 on borrowings of up to £1,000 and falling to APR 16 on outstanding balances of at least £2,000. The card offers 36 days' interest-free credit if the debt is paid off in full each time. Also, there is free travel accident insurance worth up to £50,000.

THE AA is offering its members loans to buy cars at APR 12.9 on advances of more than £3,000, with borrowings less than this amount being charged at APR 14.7. Prospective car buyers will need a down payment of at least 15 per cent of the price of the car.

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*The 90% figure is based on the 69% of customers who responded to the Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire during 1995.

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January 27 1996

lan Dawson-Shepherd

Vision with passion

Anthony Newson (Chairman of Scope)

In Memoriam

Engagements

S. BARRY TRUDEN

IF YOU went down to the shops yesterday you might have been surprised — teddy bears were picketing, not picketing, at a leading London toy store to publicise the plight of their makers in Asian factories, writes Sarah Ryle.

Supported by the World Development Movement, the teddies and giant soft toys were outside Hamley's, Regent Street.

WDM head of campaigns Harriet Lamb said that at least 250 Asian toy workers have been killed and hundreds more injured in industrial accidents and factory fires since 1993. She said some employees were paid 42p an hour for a 10-hour day and worked a six or seven-day week.

The WDM has joined forces with the TUC and the Catholic Institute for International Relations to negotiate a safety code with the industry to ensure toy companies check out their suppliers. They want western companies to observe independently-monitored health and safety policies.

Ms Lamb welcomed steps by supermarket and DIY group Sainsbury to devise written guidelines for its purchasers in conjunction with the Fair Trade Foundation. Sainsbury spokesman Tim Johns said: "We want to put into writing what we believe is already being done. We would not buy from anybody not recognising health and safety standards."

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER



'Cheating' Colorvision becomes first public company to have licence revoked by OFT • Shares fall 40pc

Stores chain discredited

Tony May

COLORVISION, the television and video stores chain, is to lose its consumer credit licences after what the Office of Fair Trading described as a series of dishonest practices including supplying second-hand goods instead of new ones.

Although the OFT has revoked 216 licences in the past three years, this is the first time a public company has been involved.

The OFT said it was carrying out the threat it made in October, after customer complaints, and for breaching the group to deal in any form of

consumer credit or credit brokerage.

Alan Tinger, managing director of the Liverpool-based group, which operates more than 80 stores and has about 4 per cent of the UK market, said the news had come as "a terrible shock" because Colorvision thought it had persuaded the OFT that company practices had changed. Colorvision would "vigorously contest" the charges and he warned that the move would have "a material effect" on the company's business.

The group's shares — more than half of them owned by the directors — fell nearly 40 per cent on the news. Colorvision makes about 45 per cent of its sales under credit arrangements. The fall leaves the

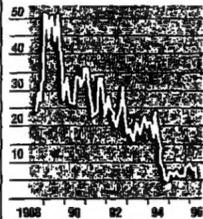
group's stock market value at \$5.5 million, against \$51 million seven years ago.

The OFT's adjudicating officer said he believed Colorvision had "committed offences under consumer protection legislation and to have engaged in business practices appearing to him to be deceitful or oppressive or otherwise unfair or improper".

These included: ● giving misleading price indications and dishonestly supplying second-hand or ex-display goods instead of new ones. ● telling customers they could not cancel agreements when it was their right to do so. ● altering details on agree-

Colorvision

Stock market value, £m.



Source: Datastream. Comments after consumers had signed them — without their consent.

● using advertisements which were deliberately misleading about the goods available;

● not offering refunds when consumers had a right to them. ● failing to carry out services agreed in repair contracts with reasonable care or skill, or within a reasonable time, or at all.

The OFT said the company had 10 convictions for trading offences such as false and misleading advertisements, while its subsidiaries had 10 convictions for similar offences. The Colorvision group is appealing to Ian Lang, the Trade and Industry Secretary, against the revocation and its licences will remain in force pending the outcome.

Colorvision said the adjudicating officer had accepted that the company had "improved its business practices" and gone to great lengths "to ensure that it kept its advertising within the law".

It agreed that it had been convicted 20 times in 11 years but "utterly refuted" that the adjudicating officer's findings were valid or were good reasons for revoking its licences.

It said it was "just as fit" as its competitors to hold licences and had been "singled out". Colorvision also published results for the six months to September 30, which showed that pre-tax losses were cut from £590,000 to £482,000, but it could not pay a dividend.

Second Maxwell trial could make taxpayers' bill £50m

Clara Dyer

Legal Correspondent

THE second Maxwell trial, set in motion yesterday, could prove to be nearly as long and costly as the first, bringing the total bill for the taxpayer to £50 million.

The trial of Kevin Maxwell, Larry Trachtenberg and Albert Fuller on the "Berlitz" charges will not start before October, the earliest date the Serious Fraud Office said it could be ready.

The prosecution indicated yesterday that the second trial could be shorter than the first, with co-operation from the defence in agreeing some of the evidence. But one lawyer who was in court said defence counsel seemed in no mood to cooperate.

Defence lawyers are likely to argue at what could be a lengthy pre-trial hearing that it would be oppressive to press the further charges, given that two of the defendants have already undergone one long trial, and the four men have had the charges hanging over them for four years.

Adverse publicity, the main ground for the unsuccessful application before the first trial alleging abuse of process, is likely to be invoked again.

The case is now stronger, given the length of the first trial, the time leading up to it and the barrage of post-trial publicity, some of it implying that the verdicts were wrong. Lord Justice Phillips indi-

cated when he refused to stop the first prosecution that the decision was finely balanced, given the extent of media coverage.

On the other hand, the prosecution will be able to point to the verdicts in the first trial as evidence that juries can discern what they see and hear in the media.

Anthony Scrivener QC, who acted for Asil Nadir before the Polly Peck tycoon fled to Cyprus, said it was difficult to succeed in having a case thrown out on grounds of oppression.

"There is a convention that you only try someone twice, but some people have been tried three times."

He suggested the defendants would probably produce medical reports to show the toll the strain was taking on their health.

Early in the proceedings, the case was split into three trials, to reduce the burden on the jury and make the case easier for them to understand. Maxwell III, the trial of Michael Stoney alone on charges of false accounting, is still planned to follow Maxwell II. His solicitor, Anthony Burton, said: "We could still be here at the film festival."

The second trial will be assigned to a new High Court judge, to be chosen shortly, according to the Lord Chancellor's Department.

The unprecedented exercise in jury vetting which preceded Maxwell I is likely to be repeated for the second trial.

The SFO's caseload

THE SFO now has 85 cases on its books. Aside from the Maxwell prosecution, there are three main uncompleted cases:

□ BCCI: There have been four trials triggered by the collapse of the banking group. The SFO have achieved convictions in all four, involving frauds totalling £1.5 billion. A fifth trial involving an alleged \$1 billion (£645 million) fraud is due to start in June 1996 when Abbas Gokal, who headed one of BCCI's main customers, faces trial.

□ Polly Peck International: A £500 million fraud is alleged. The company's founder, Asil Nadir, remains in northern Cyprus. The SFO is ready to prosecute him when he returns or is returned to the UK.

□ Brent Walker: George Walker was acquitted in 1994 of charges involving an alleged £164 million fraud. But Donald Anderson, a former finance director of a Brent Walker subsidiary, fled the country and did not stand trial. He has since been arrested and was granted bail last November after being charged in a magistrates' court of several counts including two of theft.

De Savary to the rescue

Geoffrey Gibbs

PETER de Savary, the seafaring entrepreneur who once owned Land's End and Falmouth shipyard, has emerged as the possible saviour of one of Cornwall's oldest industrial companies.

In a move that would provide a much needed boost to the economy of the Penzance region, Mr de Savary and a number of associates are negotiating to acquire the 160-year-old ship-repairing firm Holman's from the receivers.

The family-owned firm — one of the town's biggest employers — collapsed shortly before Christmas and has been run by a skeleton staff on a care and maintenance basis, since work in progress at the beginning of the receivership was completed.

Duncan Swift, joint administrative receiver from the accountants Grant Thornton, confirmed that contract negotiations were underway but said no further statement would be made until the talks had been completed.

"We hope that these negotiations are successful and that Mr de Savary and his team will bring new orders and fresh employment prospects to the area," he said.

The firm's closure last month and the accompanying redundancies came as a nasty blow to Penzance, which has long depended on the prosperity of its harbour. Unemployment in the region is running at 11.6 per cent and news of the proposed rescue has been warmly welcomed.

"If Mr de Savary is able to preserve the shipyard, and enhance the workforce, we would be absolutely delighted," Keith Giddens, director of planning and economic development for Penwith District Council, said yesterday.

Holman's, which was being run by the sixth generation of the Holman family at the time of the collapse, operates a 75-metre dry dock for overhaul work on coastal shipping.

Unison sues for pensions

Teresa Hunter

UNISON, the health workers union, is suing the West Midlands Health Authority following the collapse of a scheme which was supposed to guarantee the pensions of former health workers.

Most employees transferred their NHS pension benefits to the company's scheme, after the health authority assured them that the benefits accrued so far would be transferred in full — and would be safe. But within 18 months the company was insolvent — and so was the pension scheme.

Employees have been unable to establish what happened to their pensions, but fear they may have lost up to 20 years' contributions in the attractive NHS scheme.

The action follows the privatisation of the health authority's management services division in 1989, when staff were transferred to outside contractor QA Business Services.

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Liverpool docks strikers reject peace proposal

Martyn Halsall

SACKED Liverpool dockers yesterday rejected peace proposals from the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, which remained optimistic that a deal is in sight. The four-month strike and its proposed settlement could cost MDHC around £12 million.

After a three-hour meeting, 500 dockers voted unanimously to reject a formula hammered out this week between their union, the TGWU, and the MDHC that proposed payments of up to £25,000 for 325 former dockers, and offered alternative reinstatement for 40 men.

The offer, subject to a postal ballot to which the meeting agreed, covers only former MDHC employees.

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Saturday Notebook

Judgment time for jury fraud trials

Alex Brummer



Alex Brummer

THE decision by the Serious Fraud Office to proceed with further charges against Kevin Maxwell and others is extraordinary.

Certainly, the SFO and the prosecution lawyers cannot be overjoyed with the way they have been mauled in Parliament and by the media in the past week, having failed to secure convictions against the Maxwell brothers and associate Larry Trachtenberg. By all accounts, however, if there was a problem with the first trial — as some claim — it was not with the SFO (which has made mistakes in the past) but with the jury. It was sequestered for a longer period than any jury in UK judicial history, and came back with a verdict few had predicted.

This is due, in part, to the fact that in Britain the privacy of jury deliberations is inviolable. Yet given the outcome of the Maxwell trial and other complex fraud cases, including Brent Walker and Blue Arrow, it would be reasonable if there were some mechanism by which the Lord Chancellor's office were able to advise jury decisions. Then it could be determined more sensibly, as the Attorney-General, Sir Nicholas Lyell, has suggested, whether jury trials are appropriate in complex fraud cases, whether they should be replaced by a judge and an expert panel, or if experts should be on hand to advise the jury.

As far as complex fraud trials go, the allegations against the late Robert Maxwell and his associates have always appeared more accessible to the public than some other cases, such as Guinness (where there was a successful initial prosecution) because everyone understands that pension funds — above all else — should be sacrosanct. That is perhaps why the SFO feels so determined to press on now: the protest put forward by Kevin Maxwell, that there has been a political stitch-up, seems less well chosen.

What is certainly true is that, however strong the evidence and cleverly the SFO's case is put in any future trials, it is hard to believe that the case will not in some way be affected by the media blitz of the past week. There have been serialised books in the Guardian by Russell Davies, the Daily Mail by Tom Bower and in the Sunday Times by Roy Greenslade. There has also been at least one television documentary, although another was pushed in Sainsbury's, unprecedented media exposure.

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Spending cuts aggravate construction slump

Sarah Ryle

PARTS of the construction industry are being kept afloat by a steady flow of sewerage and water contracts, according to a survey of civil engineers. It also showed that order books could soon be at their emptiest for 15 years.

Government cutbacks on public infrastructure projects were blamed for the deepening slump in workload and jobs which is set to continue until the second half of 1997, after the next general election, the Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors' survey claimed.

The federation's director-general, John Hackett, said there was a slight increase in the balance of companies reporting more orders than did so a year or six months ago, which was mainly thanks to contracts from water and sewerage firms.

Despite an estimated £1 billion turnover from water and sewerage contracts, the FEC said that 10,000 jobs could still be lost because of cutbacks in Government road projects in England. It reported that these cutbacks have also cost civil engineers thousands of pounds in wasted tender expenses.

The federation said there was little hope of relief from the Private Finance Initiative, the Government's scheme to fund public works with private money.

Mr Hackett said: "No one expected the tap to be turned off on public spending before it was turned on to private funding. It was always intended to be additional money, and not a replacement for government funds."

Figures published yesterday showed the extent of the job losses, with the fourth-quarter operating loss widen-

ing from \$52.3 million in 1994 to \$65.1 million last year.

The net loss for the quarter, after taking account of the restructuring charge and losses on discontinued businesses, totalled \$67.6 million.

James Umruh, Unisys chairman and chief executive, said: "Our plan is for a return to profitability in 1996, despite potential disruptions from restructuring actions, particularly in the first quarter."

A group spokesman said the job losses and restructuring were expected to cut costs by \$500 million this year and \$600 million in 1997.

Loss-making Unisys to shed 7,900 jobs

Nicholas Bannister

THE shake-out of jobs in America's traditional computer industry continued yesterday when Unisys announced plans to dismiss 7,900 people at a cost of more than \$717 million (\$467 million) in redundancy payments and capacity cuts.

Unisys, the fifth-largest US computer group, announced last year that unquantified job losses and a large restructuring provision would result from its decision to split the group into three separate divisions.

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A group spokesman said the job losses and restructuring were expected to cut costs by \$500 million this year and \$600 million in 1997.

Unisys, the result of the 1986 merger of Burroughs and Sperry, has been trying to build up its services business to reduce dependence on sales

of mainframe computers and other hardware.

About 2,000 jobs are expected to go in Europe during 1996 and 1997, but the 1,600-strong UK workforce is expected to escape relatively unscathed. A spokesman said that only 100 UK jobs were likely to go.

The UK business in 1995 had its best performance in five years, with a 17 per cent rise in orders and 15 per cent increase in revenue. The services operation in the UK grew by 50 per cent, helped by several large contracts, including one from the Ministry of Defence.

The parent company's net loss for 1995 amounted to \$224.5 million, compared with \$100.5 million in the previous year.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.88	France 7.46	Italy 2.380	Singapore 2.70
Austria 15.15	Germany 2.1850	Malta 0.54	South Africa 1.54
Belgium 44.80	Greece 368.00	Netherlands 2.4500	Spain 184.00
Canada 2.0150	Hong Kong 11.45	New Zealand 2.23	Sweden 10.38
Cyprus 0.7028	India 55.54	Norway 9.80	Switzerland 1.74
Denmark 8.45	Ireland 0.95	Portugal 227.00	Turkey 8.59
Finland 8.84	Israel 4.74	Saudi Arabia 5.57	USA 1.4700

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

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fraud trials

Relief as Dutch government throws planemaker £150 million lifeline State buys Fokker time

Mark Milner
European Business Editor

THE Dutch government yesterday threw a £150 million lifeline to ailing aircraft manufacturer Fokker, which this week was forced to seek court protection from its creditors.

The cash will give the Amsterdam-based company a breathing space in which it can continue the search for a rescuer and continue work on aircraft under construction.

The government said yesterday that it would lend Fokker 255 million guilders and pay the company a further 110 million guilders as an advance against an order for four Fokker aircraft.

"I am glad that we were able to do that, but as such this is

no guarantee of a positive conclusion," Dutch economic minister Hans Wijfers said at a press conference in The Hague yesterday.

The loan will be made through the Nationale Investeringsbank, on what Mr Wijfers described as "market terms". It has been granted against unclaimed assets, which means the government will be sure to get its money back if Fokker fails.

The crisis at Fokker was precipitated by the decision of the group's largest shareholders, the German company Daimler-Benz, to stop providing financial support to Fokker. The move followed the breakdown of talks between Daimler-Benz and the Dutch government, which is Fokker's second largest shareholder, over a rescue package.

That brought Fokker, which employs almost 8,000

people, to the brink of collapse and left Holland facing the prospect of its biggest industrial shutdown. On Tuesday night, however, the company won court protection from its creditors for a large slice of its business, effectively giving the group a four-week stay of execution.

Fokker's problems could spill over to supplier firms. Daimler-Benz has already warned that up to 1,000 jobs could be at risk from a Fokker collapse, while Belfast-based Short Brothers — which makes wings for Fokker jets — has issued formal warnings of possible redundancies covering up to 1,500 workers.

Fokker is reported to be looking for an industrial partner to rescue it. The Canadian company Bombardier, which owns Shorts, has been linked with Fokker — though it has consistently denied any tie-

up. Companies from China, Taiwan and South Korea, which are keen to acquire aerospace technology, could also be interested.

Mr Wijfers declined to comment on possible partners to bail out Fokker. He will remain involved in the search for a solution. "I have a very heavy commitment and will, as a minister, give meaning to that," he said.

At a press conference after the government announcement one of the three administrators now running the Dutch company said he had not ruled out saving the whole of Fokker.

"We are not discouraged from thinking about a solution for the totality," Rutger Schimmelpenninck said.

Last night Fokker shares closed 10 per cent higher at 3.2 guilders, with about 1.8 million shares changing

hands, almost seven times the daily average over the past six months.

Friso Meeter, one of the insolvency lawyers who negotiated the survival of the Dutch truck maker, DAF, in 1993 said yesterday that debt was not the main problem for the continuation of the business.

Mr Meeter said the DAF formula could also be applied to Fokker, with the money raised from the sale of the assets used to repay at least some of the money owed to creditors. "The assets would be sold to a new company and all the debts would remain with the old company," he said.

Dutch group Philips Electronics yesterday declined to comment on speculation that management at its struggling Grundig subsidiary will take an axe to jobs at a board meeting on February 5.

Anglo-Saxon attitudes send Olivetti tumbling

Personal computers have dragged the group deep into the red. JOHN GLOVER in Milan and MARK MILNER report

THREE days following the recent £1 billion cash call, Olivetti likes to pride itself on being a public company with a strong international and institutional shareholder presence. Just to underline the point, the group announced yesterday that the once-controlling shareholder syndicate, which included the likes of the company's chairman, Carlo de Benedetti, and Mediobanca, was being wound up.

The snag for Olivetti is that the new-look shareholder lineup shows an inclination to respond to unexpected bad news with traditional Anglo-Saxon disapproval.

So when, this week, Olivetti announced that it was increasing its provisions for 1995 by another 150 billion lire (€22 million) to 1,050 billion lire — pushing the group into the red for the year to the tune of 500 billion lire — the message was not well received. Olivetti shares tumbled. They began the week at around 1,050 lire, but ended threatening the 800 lire level.

"There is an underlying worry about the overall state

of the company, where there is a real need to get rid of its loss-making personal computer division," said one dealer in Milan.

Olivetti's decision to let the cat out of the bag so far ahead of its normal April reporting date itself caused some raised eyebrows. According to the company: "Now that our ownership structure looks more like that of an Anglo-Saxon-style public company, we have the duty to be fully transparent. We expect other Italian companies will follow our example."

Consob, the Italian stock market watchdog, has a slightly different version of events. Asked if it was entirely happy about the news of an unexpectedly heavy loss coming straight after a hefty rights issue, a spokesman said Olivetti had been told "to supply the market with detailed financial information regarding last year's performance as well as an explanation for the incongruence".

Things may, in fact, be less bleak than they seem at Olivetti. "They're racing against time to get to the point where

Omnitel starts pumping out money," said Alberto Rolla of Cabotto SIM, a Milan stockbroker.

Omnitel, in which Olivetti is the major shareholder, is Italy's second mobile phone network. It went into operation last December and now claims more than 60,000 subscribers. Mr Rolla expects it to start making money in 1996.

Olivetti Telemidia, its fixed-link telecoms operation, is another promising business for the future. It has cut deals with several first-rate foreign telecoms companies and will challenge Telecom Italia, the state monopoly, when the voice market is liberalised.

Olivetti's problem is getting from here to there. Its personal computer business, the culprit behind the endless losses, is firmly ensconced in the last-chance saloon. It has borne the brunt of the restructuring, with staff numbers halved to 2,000. Senior managers say they will give it until the end of this year to recover. Rumours of a sale continue to circulate, however.

Others say that throughout the company, even the staff who have kept their jobs are badly demoralised. So, too, are shareholders. This year will be the watershed. "If I get it wrong, I'll have to pay the price," said Francesco, as Mr de Benedetti is known.



The president who is toast of the miners

IT TOOK them more than two years of occupations and demonstrations to do it, but the determination of 400 Sardinian miners to save their jobs finally paid off

this week. They were able to celebrate their success with Italy's President Scalfaro after the mines were taken over by the Sardinian regional government. The

mines will be run by a consortium led by Ansaldo Energia. Enel, the national electricity utility, has promised to buy their coal output for the next eight years.

Electricity consumers, who will pay an extra 1.2 lira per kilowatt hour on their bills, may feel they have less to celebrate.

Spain plans to eliminate £3.8bn of nuclear waste

Adela Gooch in Madrid

SPAIN'S industry ministry has backed a debt conversion plan covering almost 790 billion pesetas (£3.8 billion) invested by electrical companies in nuclear power stations which never opened because of a U-turn on energy policy.

The proposal still has to receive final approval from the finance ministry but envisages converting 30 per cent of the debt into interest-variable bonds targeted at foreign investors and 70 per cent into loans aimed at banks and other credit institutions.

The operation, one of the biggest Spanish debt auctions ever, should be concluded before the summer, freeing two per cent of the country's largest utilities of a crippling burden.

Iberdrola, which invested almost 400 billion pesetas, and Sevillana, a company part-owned by the state and having a 180 billion peseta debt. Together they account

for 99 per cent of the debt incurred in five reactors which have never opened. The remainder is split between Union Fenosa and Endesa.

"The companies will be more competitive and better able to operate in an ever more open market," said Fernando de Ybarra, president of Sevillana.

The conversion should also ease the burden on electricity users, who suffer a 3.54 per cent surcharge on energy bills, part of which goes towards servicing the nuclear debt.

Presenting the plan, Juan Manuel Eguisagaray, the industry and energy minister, said it would reduce the Spanish electrical sector's debt from 3,300 billion pesetas last year to around 2,000 billion pesetas this year.

He described it as "the beginning of the end of a historic problem generated by a massive planning error 30 years ago" — a reference to Spain's troubled nuclear history. In the 1960s, General Franco

decided to adopt an aggressively pro-nuclear stance based on the French model of the time.

Spain's first nuclear power station opened in 1968 in the province of Guadalajara about 150 kilometres from Madrid and construction of others followed at a frenetic rate.

A 1973 energy plan envisaged a total of 27 nuclear reactors which would reduce oil consumption by 30 per cent and provide 22,500 megawatt of power.

After the death of General Franco in 1975, however, a strong anti-nuclear lobby emerged and in 1984 the then recently elected Socialist government declared a moratorium on new stations, leaving the five that were about to open in a state of limbo.

In 1991, a national energy plan removed any chance of the plants operating as Spain made a clear choice towards other forms of energy, in particular gas through a pipeline link to Algeria.

L'Oréal scents success in US bid battle

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

CHUCK BERRY brought us "Mabellene, why can't you be true". Now L'Oréal has gone to Memphis, Tennessee, and conquered Expert Eyes and other beauty products owned by Maybelline.

The French cosmetics and perfumes group appears to have outbid a German rival for a firm foothold in the US market — an ambition which for years has been thwarted by threats of boycotts linked to claims of alleged anti-Semitism within L'Oréal.

A month-long takeover battle between L'Oréal and the

German cosmetics firm Job A Benckiser appeared to end this week. On Tuesday Benckiser let it be known that it would not better L'Oréal's \$44-a-share offer.

Now, only justice department intervention on anti-trust grounds can prevent L'Oréal, as the new owner of Maybelline, from taking the number two slot in the US beauty market, after Procter & Gamble, which controls 28 per cent.

But the US authorities may come under pressure to block L'Oréal's acquisition. In France, there are allegations that L'Oréal for many years maintained an anti-Jewish employment policy — a claim

which during the 1960s resulted in a US consumer boycott of L'Oréal products.

The company emphatically denies the claim and has established itself as the fourth-biggest beauty company in the US, under the name Cosmax. Last year it strengthened its share in Interbeauty, the Israeli market leader — a move which, according to some analysts, proves that the anti-Jewish claims are groundless.

L'Oréal's initial bid for Maybelline — the second-biggest US cosmetics company and owner of Yardley soaps — was \$86.7 a share, valuing the company at \$600 million (£248 million). Both sides thought they had a deal until

Benckiser emerged as a hostile bidder.

The German company, whose activity is centred on perfume, countered with an offer of \$87. Last Thursday, L'Oréal pushed its offer to \$41 and this week to \$44 — increasing Maybelline's estimated value to \$808 million. A spokesman at Benckiser indicated the company would not be attempting to better the bid "though we will be looking out for the US justice department's decision".

Maybelline last autumn lost a costly marketing battle against Revlon over new anti-ageing creams. Analysts had predicted an imminent sale of the company, which has debts

of \$150 million, but tipped Unilever or the Japanese Shiseido as acquirers.

For L'Oréal, which in the first quarter of 1995 recorded profits of Fr.2.75 billion (£243 million), the almost certain takeover is in line with its ambitions. With its own-name products, as well as Lancôme and Helena Rubinstein, the French company already has a strong share in the upper US market.

The acquisition of the more middle-market Maybelline — which in 1994 made profits of \$35 million — will provide diversification for L'Oréal and an open door to the drug-stores dominated by Procter & Gamble and Revlon.

Boss follows formula

Roger Coore

LONDON has joined Beijing, Moscow and more fashionable cities in the international network of the German menswear brand Hugo Boss. The company, whose label was an icon for a generation of yuppies but which seems to have managed the transition to the austere nineties fairly successfully, opened its first British shop last week.

Or rather Moss Bros, the retailer famous for its hire service, opened the first of four or five Hugo Boss shops in Britain, which is the company's largest market after Germany, the US and France.

You wouldn't know it from a visit to the immaculate premises next to Hamleys toy store, just down Regent Street from Gap and Liberty, but the shop which is dedicated to Hugo Boss products is actually a franchise. It is operated by Moss Bros, but to a formula laid down by Boss.

It is unusual to find the McDonald's approach in clothes retailing. "It's a flagship store," said the boss of Boss, Czech-born Peter Littmann, citing Benetton as a model. "We have 160 such stores worldwide, but we are not retailers. We are wholesalers."

Most Boss clothes are sold through department or specialist menswear stores, but Mr Littmann believes the company needs a few dedicated shops in each market, acting literally as a shop window for the brand.

The brand has been divided into three, in a marketing move designed to overcome the original label's identification with the hard-edged, materialistic eighties.



Boss of Boss... Peter Littmann

Then, Boss was the label for the masochistic City slicker, its power shoulders matching the ambition and ruthlessness of the wearers — or so they hoped.

The advertising said: "I wear Boss. I am the boss." Mr Littmann said: "It was used in a very clever way, with the men very clearly dominant over the women, but it wouldn't work any more."

The challenge for Boss was to massage the brand image so that it met nineties values, while keeping the loyalty of the eighties buyers.

"People don't buy five jackets all at once any more," Mr Littmann said. "They may only buy one or two. And they won't buy just for the label. They have to provide the right fabric, the right fit and a fair price."

So now there are three Bosses. The original has become Hugo Boss — "masculine but not macho". It remains the core brand, focusing on core business styles. Above that is Baldessarini, right at the top end of the market. And Hugo consists of more fashionable styles for younger buyers.

The trick seems to be working, despite the harsh financial climate which has put an end to the free-spending ways of former Boss customers.

The decline in company profits in the early 1990s has been reversed, despite substantial investment in geographical expansion and in marketing aimed at doubling sales by the year 2000.

The marketing budget has been virtually doubled. But that has been offset by savings from closing down the US manufacturing operation, and by slashing the proportion of manufacturing in Germany.

Update

RUSSIA has started shipping Kalashnikovs to Europe with a different sort of trigger — vodka. Bottles of Kalashnikov vodka, not to be confused with the Russian assault rifles, are on their way to Poland and Germany, according to the ITAR-Tass news agency. The top-quality vodka is being produced in small batches only on special order.

AIRBUS Industrie and Boeing have terminated their joint studies into the development of a super-jumbo jet, a spokesman for Airbus confirmed. However Airbus — the consortium made up by British Aerospace, Aerospatiale, Daimler-Benz Aerospace and Cassin — has "continued with its own investigations into the market for a large passenger aircraft".

THE German pharmaceutical industry, the world's leading drug exporter, is poised to export more this year but more than half its member firms still plan to cut jobs to compete internationally, says industry association head Karl-Gerhard Seifert.

Russian MIGs drive Swedish fighter back to drawing board

Greg McIvor, Stockholm

SWEDEN'S controversial Jas 39 Gripen fighter aircraft has suffered another blow after disclosures that it may require a new engine because of its inability to outfly Russian MIGs.

The Gripen, a multi-role attack, intercept and reconnaissance aircraft designed for the 21st century, has been dogged by problems. A Swedish newspaper

said secret simulations had revealed shortcomings against MIG fighters and the state-backed Jas consortium — controlled by aircraft-maker Saab — is now considering alternatives to the American F12 engine, manufactured by Volvo Aero Corporation.

Arne Strehling, Volvo Aero's managing director, confirmed a switch had been mooted but said it remained unclear whether the Swedish air force would

be prepared to bear the substantial cost involved.

The change would primarily affect the Gripen's third series, in development but not due to enter production for a decade. The first series entered service last year and its successor is due by the end of 1996.

Jan Ahlgren, executive vice-president of Saab Military Aircraft, said improvements to the third series were being considered but added that it was unfair to

compare the lightweight, single-engine Gripen with twin-engine MIG jets.

The Gripen is seen by detractors as a huge white elephant, which has swallowed 67 billion kronor (£3.5 billion), much of it taxpayers' money.

The aircraft was originally intended to be in service by 1990 but Sweden's air force has received only 12 of 140 planes ordered and has reduced its plan to purchase 280 planes.



News in brief
US protests at hormone ban

Slack eyes menu

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Sex appeal for the single currency may go on hold now the economic slowdown has left France and Germany uncertain of meeting tough membership terms for the exclusive Maastricht club. MARK MILNER and LARRY ELLIOTT report

Cosmetic job for Euro

SUPERMODEL Claudia Schiffer is usually associated with haute couture rather than high finance. But on Thursday Chancellor Helmut Kohl was reported to be hoping that one of the catwalk's most glamorous models could persuade the Germans to embrace the Euro...

bership of what looks like proving a very exclusive club. Indeed, on some counts, Luxembourg (which shares Belgium's currency) might be the only one of the EU's 15 member states turning up in 1999. As Spain's foreign minister, Carlos Westendorp, put it, monetary union is facing a "credibility crisis".

ions will arise within currency union is larger the more generously the fiscal convergence criteria are interpreted. The tendency of the public sector to spend money is the same as the drinker's yearning for alcohol. If currency union wishes to see itself as a union of the sober, or at least the moderate, then notorious drinkers should first demonstrate that they have successfully dried out.



Role model... But Claudia Schiffer may find promoting monetary union less fashionable than swanning down the catwalk. PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEASER

economy has meant that neither of the continent's big two can now be assured of meeting the tough terms laid down in the Dutch border town in December, 1991. That's even without those countries, such as Sweden, which would like a cap on unemployment to be one of the convergence criteria.

tainly killed off inflation but at the cost of slow growth and horrific levels of unemployment - currently 13 per cent and rising. Lengthening dole queues, together with France's generous welfare state, have put France's public finances under extreme strain. Its budget deficit is way above the 3 per cent limit demanded by the Maastricht terms, and the government was faced with last December's wave of industrial action after it proposed swinging cuts in public spending.

when the economic data for the whole of 1997 would be available. For the Germans that would mean surrendering the mark just a few months before the celebration of the currency's 50th anniversary. It is hard to see such a move as a vote-winner in the German federal elections that October - particularly as the Social Democrats seem prepared to make monetary union an election issue.

have already argued that the government should put unemployment at the top of the agenda - even if that meant giving up the franc fort. France can comfort itself with the thought that it is essential for monetary union. Countries like Italy and Spain face rather different calculations like credibility. For both, a delay in the Maastricht timetable would cut the risk that they would be dumped in Europe's currency second division.

lately it has started to listen to those who have warned that the monetarist approach to cutting budget deficits - cut big, cut early - may be putting the whole project in jeopardy. It is still possible that a sudden pick-up in growth triggered by lower rates, some EU capital spending and austerity in France will save the day. But the uncertainties over the timetable are already affecting sentiment in the financial markets. For the next two years investors will be concentrating on figures other than Ms Schiffer's.

In theory, it all looked so simple...

IN THE debate over which countries will meet which criteria for monetary union by what date, it is easy to forget just why they were chosen in the first place. The theory was relatively simple. Once countries had locked into a single currency, they would not be able to use changes in interest rates or the exchange rate in order to offset economic shocks.

had to have operated within the exchange rate mechanism for at least the two previous years, without devaluation, while long-term interest rates - the best measure of borrowing costs - had to be within two percentage points of the average of the three member states with the lowest inflation rates. Benchmarks for government debt and deficits were set at 60 per cent and 3 per cent of gross domestic product respectively, in order to keep inflationary pressures under control, while inflation itself had to be within 1.5 per cent of the average of the three best performers.

At root lies the problem of France. For the past 18 years first socialist and now Gaullist governments have maintained the franc fort policy as a necessary staging post to the eventual yoking together of the French and German economies in monetary union. But the cost to the French economy has been considerable. Deflationary policies have cer-

tainly killed off inflation but at the cost of slow growth and horrific levels of unemployment - currently 13 per cent and rising. Lengthening dole queues, together with France's generous welfare state, have put France's public finances under extreme strain. Its budget deficit is way above the 3 per cent limit demanded by the Maastricht terms, and the government was faced with last December's wave of industrial action after it proposed swinging cuts in public spending.

Keeping the Euro-sceptics at bay...

THE odds on a single currency coming on stream by the planned date of January 1, 1999 are probably no better than even. But supporters of monetary union are unlikely to give up without a fight. Here are some of the things they could do: Delay the start date until 2002. This is possible under one interpretation of article 109 of the Maastricht treaty. Advantage: Popular with those countries unlikely to make the 1999 deadline, such as Spain. Disadvantage: Whole process looks as if it is unravelling. Likelihood: Strong.

pace. Advantage: Gets the French off the hook. Disadvantage: The Germans are unlikely to wear it. Likelihood: Slender. Micro-economic boost. The European economy is growing very slowly, adding to the pressures on deficits and debt ratios. Co-ordinated cuts in interest rates, a deliberate depreciation of the German mark or fiscal spending by Brussels on infrastructure have been touted as ways to expand Europe's growth rate. Advantage: Stronger growth equals smaller deficits. Disadvantage: Bundesbank won't play ball with rate cut or mark depreciation. Likelihood: Limited public spending by Brussels is possible, otherwise not good. Micro-economic boost. Argument is that Europe's high unemployment is caused by structural rigidities, over-regulated labour markets. Supply-side measures would increase jobs, making criteria easier to hit. Advantage: Goes with the grain of Maastricht analysis. Disadvantage: May be too little, too late. Likelihood: Strong. Expect more at Lille G7 Job Summit in April.

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Left about turn, CBI. Roger Cowe. T'S Looking Glass time. As Labour leaders embrace selective schools, the CBI this week called for higher wages. Perhaps Adam Turner's first keynote economic speech as director-general of the employers' body signals a Damascene conversion, abandoning the usual bosses' position that better conditions for workers and higher profits are mutually exclusive.

Quick Crossword No. 8033. Across: 1 Tell - and tell again (7), 8 Manatee (anag) - to issue forth (7), 9 Cone-bearing evergreen (7), 10 Altar screen (7), 11 Sovereign - made to measure (5), 13 Hairy spider (5), 15 Mistaken (5), 16 Two pints (5), 21 Strong cheese (7), 22 Comparison (7), 23 Group of three musical notes - or one of three off-spring (7). Down: 7 Paid Japanese female companion (5), 12 Employer (4), 14 Den (4), 15 Synthetic (6), 16 Dried grape (6), 17 Elaborate (5), 19 Fragrance (5), 20 Seasoning plant (5).

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'Blasphemy for fast reforms children' and 'Private plan to'.